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Gothic Television

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Film and Television Studies**

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Department of Film and Television Studies

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This thesis is dedicated to Kees de Groot. I can't thank you enough.

Declaration of inclusion of published work

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for a degree at another university. Parts of chapter two of this thesis, 'The Heritages of Gothic Television and the British Gothic Anthology Series', were published by the author as '*Mystery and Imagination: Anatomy of a Gothic Anthology Series*', in Thumim, Janet. ed. 2002. *Small Screens, Big Ideas: Television in the 1950s*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris.

Abstract

This thesis examines forms of Gothic fiction on television, and defines the ways in which television produces Gothic drama which is medium-specific (e.g. formally distinct from versions of the genre in other media). This work employs textual analysis to explore Gothic television, and combines this with archival research and an examination of the changing climate of television production in a range of national and historical contexts. The thesis is organised into four case studies, each dealing with different national industries during different periods: British anthology drama of the 1960s and 70s (e.g. *Mystery and Imagination* (ABC/Thames, 1966-70), *Ghost Story for Christmas* (BBC1, 1971-78)); Danish art television in the mid-nineties (*Riget* (Danmarks Radio/Zentropa, 1994)); British adaptations of female Gothic literature, (e.g. *Rebecca* (BBC2, 1979), *The Wyvern Mystery* (BBC1/The Television Production Company, 2000)); and big-budget, effects-laden series from North America in the 1990s (e.g. *American Gothic* (CBS/Renaissance, 1995-96), *Millennium* (20th Century Fox/10:13, 1996-1999). I argue that Gothic television plays on the genre's inherent fascination with the domestic/familial, to produce television drama with an overt consciousness of the contexts in which the programmes are being viewed, a consciousness which is locatable within the text itself; as such, the thesis defines the Gothic as a genre which is well suited to presentation on television.

Furthermore, an examination is offered of the 'model' viewer as presented within the television text, enabling an understanding of the ways in which conceptions of television viewership are inscribed into television drama at the moment of production. I also interrogate the notion that television is an 'uncanny' medium by locating the precise sources of uncanniness within Gothic television, and delineate the ways in which innovations in television production have been showcased through the representation of the supernatural and the uncanny within Gothic Television.

Abbreviations

A&E Network	Arts and Entertainment Network
ABC	Associated British Corporation
ABC	American Broadcasting Company
AGB	Audley, Gapper and Brown
A-R	Associated-Rediffusion
ATV	Associated Television
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BFI	British Film Institute
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CGI	Computer Generated Image
DR	Danmarks Radio
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority
ITV	Independent Television
LWT	London Weekend Television
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
tx	transmission date
WAC	Written Archive Centre
WGBH Boston	Wavelength Great Blue Hill Boston

Introduction

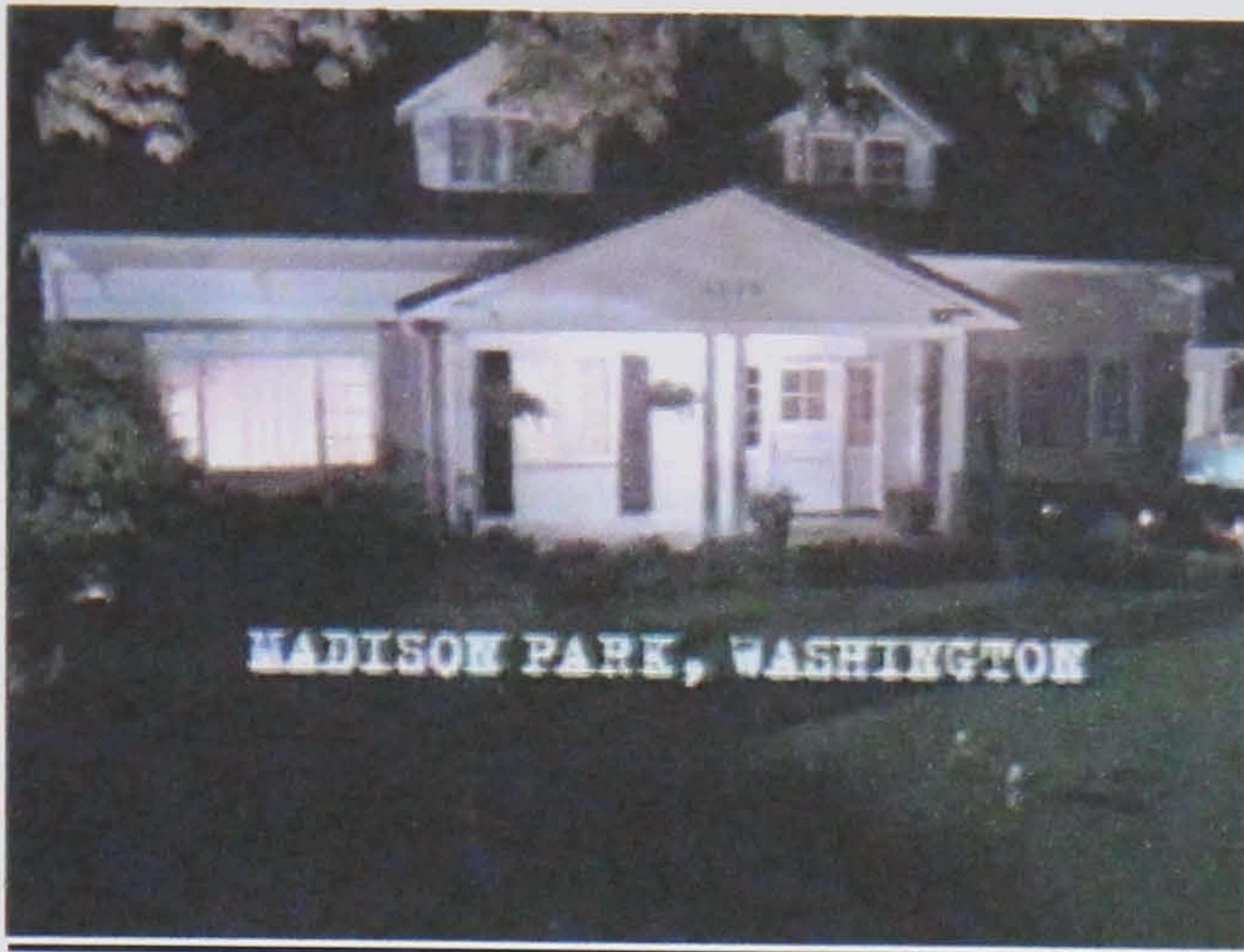


Fig. 0.1: Opening shot



Fig. 0.2: The diegetic television

A still-frame of a well-lit, suburban house at night is overlaid with the titles ‘Madison Park, Washington’ (see fig. 0.1). From the exterior, this house appears to be the epitome of normality, an image that is remarkable only in its everydayness, as a signifier of quotidian life. As the shot is ‘un-frozen’, the camera tilts down to street level accompanied by the sound of rain and the rumble of thunder, perhaps the first suggestion of a sense of unease. However, this sense of foreboding is immediately undercut by a cut to the warmly lit interior of the house, with a track beginning on an extreme close-up of a television screen showing the ending of a black and white film, *Miracle on 34th Street* (George Seaton, US, 1947): on screen, a man and a woman stand close to one another as she gasps ‘Oh no, it can’t be...’, with the faint sound of Christmas music heard in the background of the film’s soundtrack (see fig. 0.2). From this close-up, the camera tracks left and away from the screen towards a blazing fire in a faux-stone fire place, as ‘Jingle Bells’ plays on the television in the background and the woman’s dialogue continues: ‘It must have been left here by the people who moved out’, to which her partner responds ‘Hmmm, maybe I didn’t do such a

wonderful thing after all'. During this off-screen dialogue from the television set, the camera continues tracking slowly around the room, again taking in the signifiers of the ordinariness of the space: the stone-clad fireplace, a large potted plant, an occasional table cluttered with everyday objects (a lamp, bonbon jar, a stack of coasters, etc.) (see figs. 0.3-0.5). Finally, the camera settles on a side view of a very average looking family: in the background, the mother sits in an armchair, with the heavy-set father squeezed in next to his two daughters on the sofa placed on the right-hand side of the shot, the eldest daughter in the foreground of the shot looking tired or bored with her hand resting on her head (see fig. 0.6). In this position, the mother sighs 'Oh, it gets me every time', looking towards the television, prompting the father and the younger daughter to look at her, nodding and smiling. As the mother stands and announces 'I'm going to bed everybody', her husband replies 'Night night, Hon', and the younger daughter also answers 'Night night', whilst the elder daughter in the foreground of the shot lowers her hand and clutches the cushion beside her. As her father looks towards her and asks 'Can't you say goodnight to your mother', she looks down, rather than towards her benignly smiling mother, and mumbles 'Night Mom'. On this movement and dialogue, a cut is made to a medium shot of her mother smiling as she leaves the living room, calling 'Night all', which is followed by another track down towards the sofa at the heart of the room. Now the father and younger daughter are in focus in the background of the shot, with the eldest daughter in the foreground and out of focus. As the Twentieth Century Fox signature tune is heard coming from the television off screen, the father announces 'That's about everybody's bed time', and the camera immediately racks focus onto the eldest daughter as mournful violins cut in on the extra-diegetic soundtrack (see fig. 0.7).



Fig. 0.3: Everyday domesticity



Fig. 0.4: Everyday domesticity



Fig. 0.5: Everyday domesticity

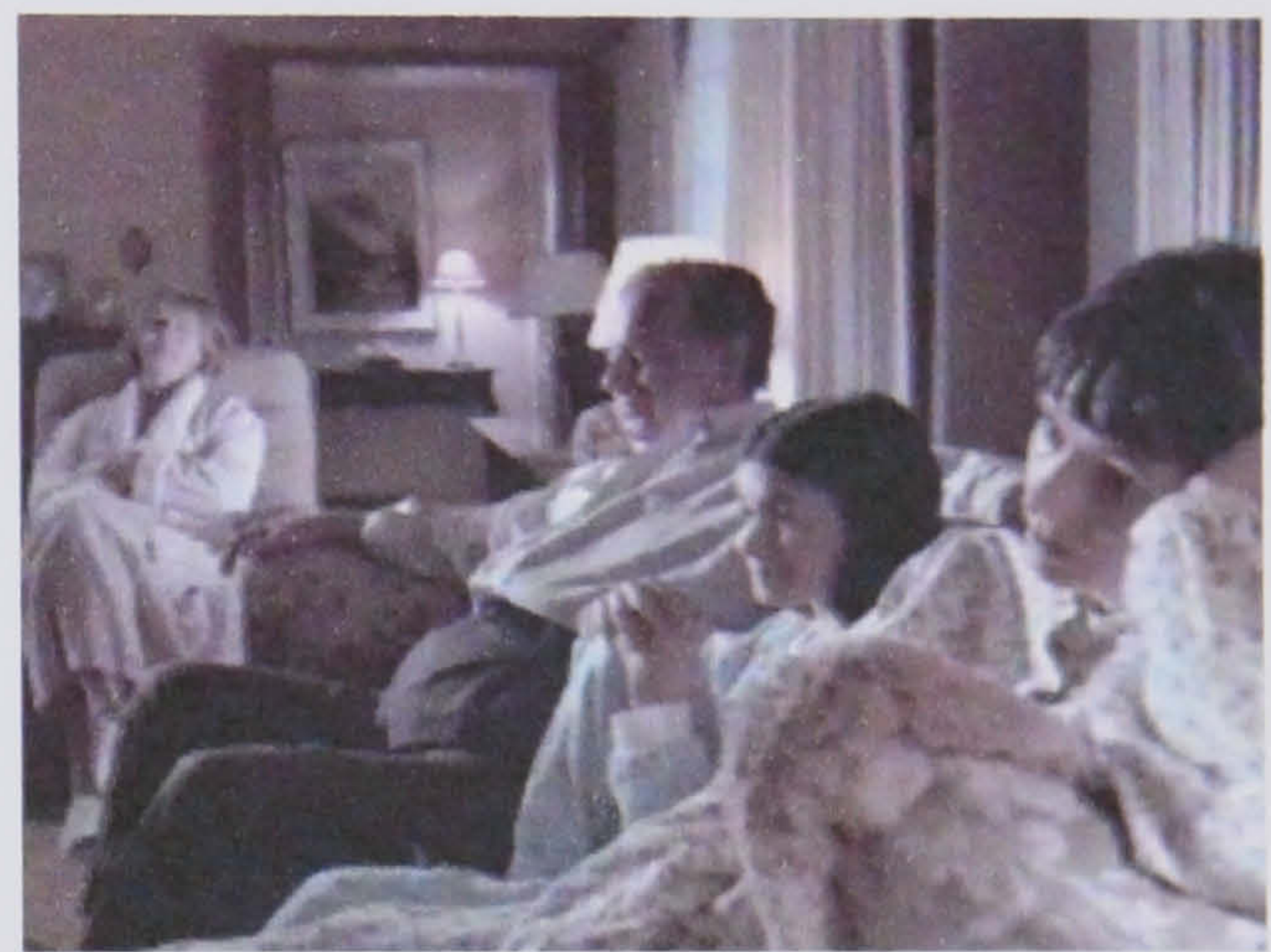


Fig. 0.6: The family watching television



Fig. 0.7: The victim racks into focus

After this distinct change of mood, the elder daughter jumps up and asks ‘Who wants some ice-cream?’: there then follows a cross-cut exchange between the three

characters, during which the tension in the room is palpable. Following the elder daughter's exit from the room, a cut is made to a close-up of her hand digging frantically into some over-frozen ice-cream with a spoon, and then a slow zoom into her face as she panics, trying to dish up the dessert.



Fig. 0.8: Memory montage of abuse

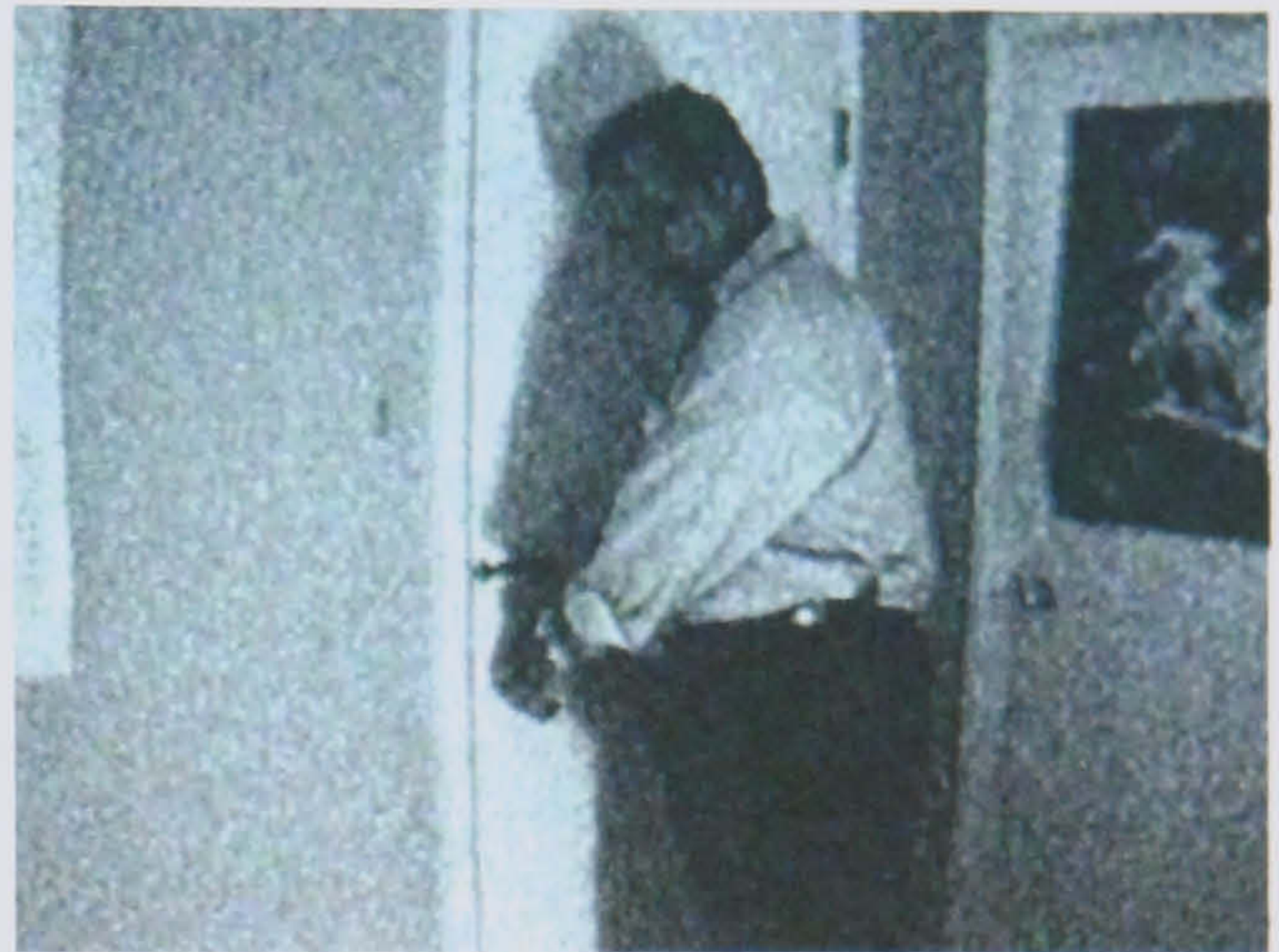


Fig. 0.9: Memory montage of abuse



Fig. 0.10: Memory montage of abuse

As her forehead collapses forward onto the door of a kitchen unit, a cut is made to an extremely fast edited montage of the following, taken, we assume, from her psychological point-of-view: a darkly lit extreme close-up of her father's teeth, gritted in exertion and coming closer to the camera (see fig. 0.8); a grainy, black and white image of her father locking a bedroom door (see fig. 0.9); an obscured shot of sweaty palms

pushing down on the lens of the camera; a high angle shot of an arm pushing down on a mattress; an extreme close-up of a man's eye: a grainy, black and white shot of a bedroom window; a very blurred shot of a fat and glistening mouth: a close-up of half of the father's face, darkly lit with his visible eye glinting: an extreme close-up of an open mouth; a low angle shot of a hand trying to push away the father's face: a medium shot of hands pulling at a duvet; a blurred close-up of a tongue and biting mouth; hands pulling at a duvet, from which the camera tracks up to reveal a girl's bedroom from an extremely canted angle (see fig. 0.10). As a cut is made back to the image of the daughter standing in the kitchen, her face, on the verge of tears, resting against the kitchen cabinet, it is clear that the source of the tension in the preceding sequence has been revealed.

The above description outlines the opening of an episode of the U.S. television series *Millennium* (10:13/20th Century Fox Television, 1996-99), entitled the 'The Well-Worn Lock', which was broadcast on the 20th of December 1996. The episode deals with the disclosure of the prolonged physical, mental, and sexual abuse suffered by the elder daughter at the hands of her father: as such, it is a archetypal Gothic narrative of domestic angst and repressed family secrets. In this opening sequence, the quotidian activity of watching television (albeit a traditional Christmas film broadcast on television) is presented as a benign form of family entertainment which draws the nuclear family together; however, the everydayness of this activity also emphasises, or brings to the surface, the concurrent threat of the underside of domestic/familial life (in this case, child abuse), revealed in the second part of the sequence as the elder daughter 'remembers' the scene of her abuse. As the normality of this family is stressed by the slow track around the living room, which takes in the signifiers of the almost banal domesticity of the space (television set, fireplace, pot plant, table lamp,

etc.), it is shown that the innocuous normalcy of the family living room is contained within the *appearance* of the familiar space, rather than in the actuality of this family's life: indeed, this contrast between appearances and reality is also a subtext of the film playing on TV, which follows the story of Kris Kringle (Edmund Gwenn), an old man who believes himself to be Santa Claus but who, in actuality, may be mentally ill. In actual fact, the harmony and innocence of this family scene is first undercut in a small way by the actions of the eldest daughter: she is obviously less happy than her smiling relatives, is uncommunicative, and her actions show that she is tense and on edge, perhaps unhappy with the enforced proximity of her slightly grotesque father (he is overweight and sweaty-looking). This sense of unease is then reinforced by the advent of the sorrowful, extra-diegetic violin music which cuts in at the end of the third shot as she racks into focus, disrupting the status quo of the preceding sequence through a change in soundtrack and an intrusive shooting technique. Therefore, in this sequence a certain tension is established between the banally familiar aspects of family life and the unspeakably terrifying characters and events of the Gothic genre, as represented by the later montage sequence where the terror of sexual abuse is rendered in an oblique, but potentially affective, way, through patterns of fast cutting and jarring shooting techniques and film stocks. In this flashback, the extreme violence of rape is represented through suggestive techniques whereby a number of disjointed, though interrelated, images (of hands, eyes, mouths, bed clothes, etc.) stand in for a more explicit portrayal of the horrific event, in a moment which is characteristic of the series' key visual conceit (the representation of psychical point-of-view through a variety of unusual filming techniques¹).

¹ A medley of different film stocks, the use of frenzied, mobile digital video cameras, extreme forms of lighting and framing, and fast editing.

Furthermore, the presence of the television set as the focal point of the living room is significant to this thesis, an inclusion that emphasises the position of television as an important object within the Gothic narrative *on* television. On one level, the presence of the television set indicates Gothic television's self awareness, the self-referentiality of television viewing highlighted not only that this image of Christmas viewing was broadcast at Christmas, but also by the fact that, in the third shot of the sequence, the Twentieth Century Fox signature tune is heard playing off-screen but within the diegesis (*Miracle on 34th Street* is a Fox production; *Millennium* is produced by the Fox network and thus this episode itself is also ended by the sound of this tune). This self-referentiality seeks to establish a certain congruence between the domestic space on screen and the homes in which the drama is being viewed, the textual allusion to the act of watching television emphasising a potential closeness between the diegetic and extra-diegetic houses linked to this programme. In turn, this implied closeness which is delineated by the presence of the television set in this opening sequence finds the medium of television as a source of the uncanny within the home, as an object with the potential to be both ameliorative and familiar (as it is for the mother in this sequence), and also disturbing, as a source of anxiety: here the enforced proximity of the abuser and his victim creates a disturbing frisson around television viewing, but elsewhere in this series television serves as an access point for horror to enter the home (as discussed in chapter five of this thesis).

This initial example therefore opens up a number of the central propositions of this examination of Gothic television. Firstly, it highlights the fact that the Gothic is a genre which is well-suited to television drama in that it is a genre which is inherently interested in, and situated within, the domestic (Gothic television can therefore be seen as a domestic form of a domestic genre). Furthermore, by examining Gothic

television. the medium's modes of address, and acknowledgement of television spectatorship and the domestic reception context, may become all the more evident. In turn, these propositions relate to the notion that Gothic television is distinct from other versions of the genre in different media (film, theatre, visual art, literature, etc), though I will later argue that Gothic television also refers to these versions of Gothic fiction in various ways, suggesting that the specific nature of the Gothic narrative on television might be located in its contexts of production and reception. These proposals, and the notion that the Gothic is a genre which is presented in order to showcase the technological and artistic possibilities of television production (as discussed in chapters two, three and five of this thesis), are explored throughout in a number of different national and historical contexts, in an attempt to delineate the specific nature of the Gothic as it appears on television. As such, this thesis can be seen as an intervention in both Gothic studies and television studies, and, subsequently, as an analysis of the ways in which these two disciplines speak to one another.

A singular definition of the Gothic as a fictional genre has, throughout the history of Gothic studies, been difficult to isolate, due in no small part to the fact that the Gothic has been alternately described as an aesthetic, mode or style, as a set of particular themes and narrative conventions, as a sub-genre of fantasy, and, initially, as an isolated historical movement. The more successful attempts at such a categorisation of the Gothic as a genre have produced lists of characteristics (plot events, settings, characters, etc.) which the Gothic may or may not deploy. For example, David Punter proposes the following definition in his study of the literary Gothic:

[the fictional Gothic is characterised by] an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural, the presence of highly stereotyped characters, and the attempt to deploy and perfect techniques of literary suspense. (1980, 1)

To this list we might add the following: a tendency toward convoluted plotting and multiple narrators, a frequent deployment of horror and/or disgust, and an obsession with motifs of the uncanny.

Defining Gothic television presents further problems. Unlike Gothic literary fiction, it is not a category which is utilised by television industry professionals to define their programmes in the same way in which publishers and authors define Gothic novels and stories, nor one which exists in everyday parlance (and is therefore not regularly used by viewers in categorising their viewing habits), nor is the term found in the generic shorthand which is employed in listings guides to describe new series (for example, ‘the latest sci-fi thriller’, ‘a new situation comedy for Saturday night’, and so on). However, none of this precludes us from discussing the Gothic as a recognisable category of television drama; a genre may indeed be identified or generated by critical activity (cf. Altman, 1999; Naremore, 1998), the most prominent example being the discussion of *film noir* in film studies.

In reference to the thumb-nail sketch of the Gothic given above, it is also necessary to produce a specific taxonomy of Gothic television in order to distinguish the texts in question from the other generic categorisations which are applied to them: for example, ‘supernatural thriller’, ‘spooky drama’, or ‘made-for-television horror’, all of which have been used to define the narrative and stylistic parameters of series or dramas which I would subsequently describe as Gothic. This preliminary attempt to define something called ‘Gothic television’ allows for intuitive starting points from

which this investigation can then move on, testing and complicating the following definition. In some cases, such as the television adaptation of classic Gothic literature, it is clear to see the origins of the definition ‘Gothic television’: however, more broadly, the programmes which make up the corpus of Gothic drama can be linked together both thematically and stylistically. The Gothic television narrative is likely to feature some or all of the following: a pervading sense of terror or unease inclined to evoke fear/disgust in the viewer; the presence of highly stereotyped characters and plots derived from Gothic literary fiction (e.g. the hero/heroine trapped in a menacing situation by an evil villain, or the family/institution attempting to cover up repressed secrets from the past, etc.); representations of the supernatural which are either overt (particularly created through the use of special effects) or implied (suggested rather than being given full revelation); a proclivity towards the structures and images of the uncanny (repetitions, returns, déjà vu, premonitions, ghosts, doppelgängers, animated inanimate objects, severed body parts, etc.); and, perhaps most importantly for this thesis, homes and/or families which are haunted, tortured, or troubled in some way. In addition, these narratives are likely to be organised in a complex way, structured around flashback sequences, memory montages, and other narrative interpolations. In terms of an overriding ‘look’, Gothic television is often noticeably dark, with a mise-en-scène dominated by drab and dismal colours, shadows and closed-in spaces. Furthermore, Gothic television is also inclined towards both camerawork and sound-recording taken from a subjective perspective (these perspectives range from the ‘spirits-eye-view’ of ghosts and supernatural beings, to the point of view of the victimised heroine in adaptations of the female Gothic novel).

With a working definition that remains necessarily inclusive, we might now begin to think about which programmes fall into this category and the decisions which

have been made in constructing the corpus of this thesis. Throughout this thesis, I examine a broad range of material which falls within the above delineation of Gothic television, produced in different national and historical contexts (although all material included here has been broadcast on terrestrial television in Britain²). The four case study chapters are organised around the following sub-categories of Gothic television, which are also identified in relation to certain national industries: British Gothic anthology series of the 1960s and 70s, based on the adaptation of ‘classic’ Gothic literature (e.g. *Mystery and Imagination* (Associated British Corporation [ABC], 1966-68; Thames, 1968-70), *Ghost Story for Christmas* (BBC1, 1971-78)); the television work of Danish filmmaker, Lars von Trier (*Riget* (Danmarks Radio [DR]/Zentropa, 1994)); lavish adaptations of female or woman-centred Gothic novels for British television (e.g. *Rebecca* (Carlton Television/Portman Productions, 1997), *The Wyvern Mystery* (BBC/The Television Production Company, 2000)); and spectacular supernatural serial drama from the United States in the 1990s (e.g. *American Gothic* (Columbia Broadcasting System [CBS]/Renaissance, 1995-96), *Millennium*). As this corpus is organised into a series of case studies, I do not claim to provide absolute coverage of every instance of Gothic drama broadcast on British terrestrial television over the last sixty five years, but rather offer analyses of several ‘moments’ in the history of Gothic television.

Tzvetan Todorov, describing the ‘case study’ or ‘scientific’ method of genre study, notes the following at the beginning of his structural examination of the fantastic:

[o]ne of the first characteristics of scientific method is that it does not require us to observe every instance of a phenomena in order to describe

² Please note, however, that for reasons of clarity all transmission dates supplied pertain to the original

it; scientific method proceeds rather by deduction. We actually deal with a relatively limited number of cases, from them we deduce a general hypothesis by other cases, correcting (or rejecting) it as needs be. (1975.

4)

Todorov's delineation of this method thus allows us to proceed in utilising the case study to deduce a definition of the genre and a number of observations about its characteristics and variations. Were I to offer 'the whole picture' of Gothic television in Britain, I would have to include discussion and analysis of the following in my account:

A Ghost Story (BBC, 1947)
Rebecca (BBC, 1947)
The Edgar Allen Poe Centenary (BBC, 1949)
Rebecca (BBC, 1954)
Hour of Mystery (ABC, 1957)
Tales of Mystery (Associated Rediffusion [A-R], 1961-63)
The Wednesday Thriller (BBC1, 1965)
Mystery and Imagination
The Woman in White (BBC1, 1966)
Haunted (ABC, 1967-68)
Whistle and I'll Come to You (BBC1, 1968)
Late Night Horror (BBC2, 1968)
Journey to the Unknown (Associated Television [ATV]/Hammer/20th Century Fox Television, 1968-70)
Ghost Story for Christmas
Dead of Night (BBC2, 1972)
Supernatural (BBC1, 1977)
Count Dracula (BBC2, 1977)
Rebecca (BBC1, 1979)
Hammer House of Horror (Hammer/Thames, 1980)
The Woman in White (BBC2, 1982)
Northanger Abbey (BBC2/Arts and Entertainment Network [A&E Network], 1987)
Twin Peaks (Lynch Frost Productions/Spelling Entertainment/Twin Peaks Productions Inc., 1990-91)
The X-Files (20th Century Fox Television/10:13, 1993-2002)
Riget/The Kingdom
Chiller (Yorkshire, 1995)
Ghosts (BBC1, 1995)
American Gothic

transmission of the programmes in their country of origin, unless otherwise stated.

Millennium

Poltergeist: The Legacy (PMP Legacy Productions/Showtime Networks Inc./Trilogy Entertainment Group, 1996-99)

Profiler (Sander Moses Productions/Three Putt Productions/National Broadcasting Company [NBC], 1996-2000)

Riget II/The Kingdom II (DR/Zentropa, 1997)

The Haunting of Helen Walker (aka Turn of the Screw) (Norman Rosemont Production Ltd/Sky TV, 1997)

The Woman in White (BBC/Carlton/Wavelength Great Blue Hill Boston [WGBH Boston], 1997)

Rebecca (1997)

Buffy, the Vampire Slayer (20th Century Fox Television/Mutant Enemy Inc./Kuzui Enterprises/Sandollar Television, 1997-)

Brimstone, (Warner Bros. Television, 1998-99)

Ultraviolet (World Television, 1999)

Turn of the Screw (United Film & TV Productions/Meridian, 1999)

Angel (20th Century Fox Television/Mutant Enemy Inc./Kuzui Enterprises/Sandollar Television, 1999-)

The Wyvern Mystery

Christopher Lee's Ghost Story for Christmas (BBC1, 2000)

The Others (Dreamworks Television/NBC Productions, 2000)

Urban Gothic (Channel 5, 2000-01)

Dr. Terrible's House of Horrible (BBC2, 2001)

Strange (BBC1, 2002)

Whilst many of these examples are discussed in the following chapters, it would be impossible to afford them all the same amount of attention.

Any study of television genre must also acknowledge the problematic of generic hybridity. If *Rebecca* (1997) is a Gothic drama, isn't it also a heritage or costume drama, a literary adaptation, perhaps even a romance? *Millennium*, on the other hand, might also be described as a serial drama, a cop show, a serial killer narrative, and even a piece of television fantasy. As Graeme Turner has argued, '[i]t is pointless to insist on generic purity in relation to television programmes... Television genres are notoriously hybridised and becoming more so' (2001a, 6). However, it is not the aim of this thesis to argue for generic purity: rather, at various moments during the discussion of these case studies, generic hybridity is brought to the foreground of the discussion in order to deepen our understanding of the characteristics and preoccupations of Gothic television.

There is a certain timeliness in this study of Gothic television, in relation to a broadening academic interest in the study of generic television drama. It is not only true that, if we look to the examples of Gothic television offered above, there has been a marked increase in the number of Gothic dramas broadcast on British television, but also that the number of studies of non-realist, generic television drama in general has concurrently multiplied. One need only look towards the wealth of critical literature being currently produced on the teen-horror crossover, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (e.g. Wilcox & Lavery, 2002; Parks & Levine, 2002; the online ‘*Buffy* studies’ journal, www.slayage.tv), or recent book and thesis-length analyses of other instances of ‘telefantasy’ (e.g. Harrison et al, 1996; Johnson, 2002; Lavery et al, 1996), or indeed the forthcoming AHRB-funded research project on ‘Generic TV Drama’ being conducted at the University of Reading, to chart the increase in critical interest in what might be described as the ‘underside’ of television drama. Julian Petley, describing a similar shift in interest in British cinema which did not fit into the realist paradigm of British filmmaking upheld in film histories and film criticism for such a long time, termed this work a rediscovery of British cinema’s ‘lost continent’ (1986), arguing that,

these films form another, repressed side of British cinema, a dark, disdained thread weaving the length and breadth of that cinema, crossing authorial and generic boundaries, sometimes almost entirely invisible, sometimes erupting explosively, always received critically with fear and disapproval. Like repressed libidinal forces these films form a current running underground, surfacing only intermittently. (ibid., 98-99)

Petley’s eloquent metaphor, of the underground stream that erupts spectacularly at various points along its route, might equally be applied to the history of Gothic

television in Britain. These programmes both ‘erupt’ into the flow of broadcast television at sporadic intervals, challenging perceptions of television as an inherently realist medium, and are also beginning to surface within the academy at the moment in which the received histories of television drama as a realist form are being challenged.

It is now pertinent to return to the question of the Gothic’s inherent suitability to television drama, and to say some more about how this genre makes the medium’s self-reflexivity or self-referentiality all the more visible. As was suggested at the beginning of this introduction, one of the key and definitive aspects of Gothic television is its awareness of the domestic space as a site that is loaded with Gothic possibilities. Furthermore, it is television’s ontological status as a domestic medium which potentially emphasises this Gothic rendering of homes and families, by drawing implicit correlations between the domestic spaces on screen and those extra-textual domestic spaces in which the dramas are being viewed. As Lynne Spiegel has argued in her analysis of television and domestic space in the US in the 1950s (1992b), the ‘television as a mirror of family life’ argument is an oversimplification of the ways in which representations of the domestic space on television highlight certain aspects of the familial and domestic experience. For Spiegel, in the context of situation comedies of the 1950s, television reflects back the theatricality of middle class suburban living (see 1992b, 136-180); in the Gothic drama, television emphasises the anxieties and paranoias of the domestic space and family life.

Throughout this thesis I explore the possibilities of locating an image of both the reception context of television and, indeed, the television viewer, by analysing the text itself, constructing what Umberto Eco might call a ‘model viewer’ by reading the Gothic television drama’s modes of address and by scrutinising its semantic and

syntactic elements. The term 'model viewer' is adapted from Eco's work on the model reader (1979; 1994) and his proposition that 'in a story there is always a reader, and this reader is a fundamental ingredient not only of the process of storytelling but also of the tale itself' (1994, 1). In the context of television, this theory translates to suggest that both the viewer and the context of viewing (the home) are fundamental ingredients within the drama, and are therefore present and locatable within the television text. This is one of the central propositions that will be explored in this thesis in relation to Gothic television.

Paddy Scannel's notion of the 'event as broadcast' is also useful here in delineating the importance of television's reception context. In his study *Radio, Television, and Modern Life* (1996), Scannel argues that there is a fundamental difference between events and events as broadcast, asking the question 'Should what is being broadcast adapt itself to, and seek to enter into, the contexts in which it is being heard [and seen]?' (1996, 78). Scannel writes primarily about news coverage on television and radio (specifically the radio coverage of the coronation of the Duke of York), but I think that his question could equally be posed of television drama, or in fact, could be rephrased to enquire 'does the Gothic television drama being broadcast adapt itself to, and seek to enter into, the contexts in which it is being heard and seen?' In light of this line of questioning, might we not make a distinction between the drama and the 'drama as broadcast', and think about the ways in which the text of Gothic television is imbued with further meaning or impact when broadcast? By asking this question, the discoveries of this study of Gothic television can be broadened and applied to a wider understanding of television drama and the ways in which television textually reflects upon itself and its reception contexts. As Graeme Turner notes,

for those who study television, genre is a means of managing television's notorious extensiveness as a cultural form by breaking it into more discrete and comprehensible segments... Researchers have found that to understand the characteristics, conventions and pleasures of a particular television genre is also to understand a great deal about television as a cultural form. (2001b, 5)

In this thesis, the analysis of the Gothic genre on television might enable us to think about the ways in which drama on television is distinct from the dramatic output of other media, and, more specifically, to think about the ways in which television drama reflects upon the status of the medium itself.

These observations ultimately bring up questions of methodology, in that this method of analysing television's relationship with the home runs contra to many of the more usual empirical studies of television's domestic space within television studies. From the very earliest attempts to make sense of the phenomenon of television, right up to current debates about the nature of the medium in a technologically transitional moment in its history, the home has been a hotly contested and divergently depicted site within the realm of television studies. Characteristically, given television studies' position as the hybrid product of a number of disciplines (literary, film and cultural studies, as well as the social sciences in general (cf. Brunsdon, 1998)), the questions asked of and about domestic space in relation to the study of television are manifold and diverse. Whereas the concerns of this thesis lie largely in the description and analysis of how the domestic viewing context is acknowledged by or reflected in the television text (and how those producing Gothic television drama define the relationship between the domestic viewer and the form and content of their work), other scholars of television have

sought to examine the relationship between television and domestic space in different ways. For example, Lynne Spigel (1992b; 2001) and others have examined television's domestic space through a discussion of those intertextual discourses of domesticity, primarily located within contemporary journalism, lifestyle magazines, and advertising, which construct an image of what television is, or might be, within the broader context of cultures of domestic space. Looking at domestic space even more empirically, television scholarship coming out of cultural studies has utilised ethnographic research methods to ask questions about the ways in which television interacts with the home, and, in turn, the ways in which the domestic viewer interacts with television (e.g. Morley, 1986; Gray, 1992; Tufte, 2000; Wood, 2001)³. However, what this thesis asks is whether it is equally valid to make assumptions about who might be watching a piece of television (and indeed, where that act of viewing might be taking place) by looking to television itself, and by seeking out textual evidence, supported by production research, of the ways in which television is inherently preoccupied by its domestic viewing context and the image of 'home'.

The aforementioned production research in this analysis of Gothic television has been mainly reliant on the holdings of a number of written archives: the BBC Written Archive at Caversham, the British Film Institute [BFI] library, and the now sadly disbanded ITC library. By conducting extensive research at these sites, looking at material such as production files, drama policy documents, industry-based audience research (both quantitative⁴ and qualitative⁵), publicity and marketing material, press cuttings and listings guides, and other tie-in material, I have attempted to reconstruct a

³ Indeed, Thomas Tufte's work on Brazilian television viewing (2000) challenges the Western conception of television's domestic viewing context by noting the hybrid position of television as both a public and private medium in that it provides a site of interaction between the house and the street, as does Anna McCarthy's recent study of forms of non-domestic television in the US (2001).

⁴ e.g. Audley, Gapper and Brown [AGB] Programme Ratings held at the ITC Library

⁵ e.g. BBC Audience Research Reports held at the BBC Written Archive, Caversham.

picture of the attitudes held towards Gothic television by both industry professionals and others associated with the industry (namely television reviewers and journalists). This research has allowed me to contemplate the pleasures and attractions offered by Gothic television, as well as issues surrounding the problems and the potential impropriety of presenting the genre on a domestic, broadcast medium. Furthermore, this production research has enabled me to interrogate the ways in which those producing the dramas in question acknowledge or implicate certain forms of viewing and reception within the discourses surrounding the television text, just as, in her analysis of the British soap opera, *Crossroads* (ATV, 1964-88), Charlotte Brunsdon argues that programme publicity, scheduling, and advertising all imply a certain kind of expected audience for the soap series (in the case of *Crossroads*, the female viewer (1981)).

Looking at the written documents which accompany and, in some cases, survive the Gothic television dramas of this thesis, I was also struck by the fact that Gothic television not only tells us a great deal about medium specificity in terms of its reflection on the domestic reception context, but that it also offers insight into the changing modes of production of television drama at various pivotal moments. By reading the production files of the 1968 anthology series *Late Night Horror* (produced for BBC2 by Harry Moore) for example, it soon becomes clear that the Gothic genre, with all its concomitant blood and gore, had been chosen at this precise moment in the history of British television drama to demonstrate the new technology required by the advent of colour broadcasting in Britain. In this sense, it is hoped that this study will illuminate the ways in which issues of genre interact with issues of production, and, furthermore, that an analysis of the Gothic genre might also take into consideration the ways in which innovation in television production has been showcased through a

representation of the Gothic or supernatural (particularly in chapters two and five). It is not unusual for Gothic/supernatural fictions and imagery to be deployed to 'showcase' breakthroughs in the technologies of representation. For example, in his long-ranging study of the pre-history of cinema, Laurent Mannoni argues that '[d]iabolical subjects were one of the commonest themes of lantern imagery over a long period [roughly, the 13th to the 18th centuries]' (2000, 110). and both Mannoni and Terry Castle (1995) go on to document the fact that the Gothic spectacles of the late eighteenth century, the phantasmagorias of Paul Philidor and Étienne-Gaspard Robert (aka Robertson), allowed for the most graphic and dramatic demonstrations of the new technologies which afforded still images the appearance of animation and movement⁶. As Marina Warner concurs,

When showmen staged the first moving pictures... the relationship of this new invention to fantasy (as opposed to reality) seemed its most marvellous property... the new, moving flux of images held out the enthralling possibility of passing beyond the visible to the (normally) invisible, from the real to the supernatural. (1993, 14)

Just as in the Gothic dramas of the London patent theatres of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where skill in stage design was often demonstrated by the tricks and traps which allowed for a visual manifestation of the supernatural⁷, so did the projected image fully utilise many of its new possibilities through Gothic representation. Whilst it would not be accurate to suggest that the Gothic mode was the only way in which early cinema technology was showcased for instance, it is true

⁶ 'The pictures shown were animated and mobile, appearing to rush towards a terrified audience who were certainly not used to such an assault of images. In addition, the macabre show devised around this new type of projection heightened the impression of unease and fear in the spectators' (Mannoni 2000, 136)

⁷ Such as the Pepper's Ghost trick (circa. 1860-90), which enabled a live actor's spectral image to appear on stage during a play, via a system of under-floor lights and mirrors (see Ranger 1991)

that such pioneers as Georges Méliès in France⁸ and G.A. Smith in the UK⁹ 'showed off' their new art through cinematographic tricks which, as Paul Hammond states of Méliès, 'were particularly suitable to satisfy [his] appetite for the Phantasmagoric' (1974, 37). In these instances of the Gothic image appearing in conjunction with new audio-visual technologies of representation, we begin to see a relationship developing between technological innovation and the Gothic genre, a relationship which will be explored in this thesis in the context of Gothic television, both in relation to the anthology series on British television in the 1960s and 70s (particularly *Mystery and Imagination*), and the more recent examples of the big budget, visually spectacular Gothic series from the United States, such as *American Gothic* and *Millennium*.

As was stated earlier, this thesis is broken down into four case-studies taken from different national and historical contexts, with the first chapter looking at the existing critical literature on Gothic fictions, delineating a theoretical background for the ensuing analyses. The second chapter, 'The Heritages of Gothic Television and the British Gothic Anthology Series', deals with Gothic anthology drama produced in Britain in the 1960s and 70s, and charts the emergence of two separate Gothic aesthetics which developed as a response to the possibilities and limitations of production and broadcasting during this period. These two divergent strands of Gothic television, the restrained, suggestive ghost story and the effects-laden, spectacular, supernatural horror tale, emerged partly as a result of the variety of heritages available to those working to establish an aesthetics of television drama during this period. Rather than seeing the early period of British television drama as limited to a singular theatrical ancestry, in this chapter I chart the ways in which the anthologised Gothic television drama of the 1960s and 70s referenced the literary, theatrical, radiophonic,

⁸ E.g. *Le Manoir du diable* (1896).

and cinematic versions of the genre, and through this textual ‘borrowing’ suggested the boundaries for Gothic television. Furthermore, this chapter also seeks to delineate the ways in which the Gothic genre was utilised as a response to the burgeoning competition of an expanding television service, both through the showcasing of innovative production technologies and, perhaps alternately, through an insistence on the restrained propriety and good taste associated with notions of quality broadcasting and a public service ethos.

The third chapter of this thesis, ‘*Riget (The Kingdom)*: Art Television and the Uncanny’, also looks at a particular example of Gothic television which was produced as a response to competition: Lars von Trier’s uncanny hospital drama, *Riget (The Kingdom)*. One of the responses of Danmarks Radio, the Danish equivalent of the BBC in this country, to the loss of its long running monopoly of Danish television broadcasting took the form of employing one of the country’s most famous (perhaps notorious) auteurs of art cinema in the nineties to produce a television-specific work. Von Trier in turn created a piece of Gothic television drama, the medium-specific identity of which was further complicated by a run of international theatrical releases, prompting the question of whether this high profile piece of art television still had an inherently domestic identity. In the following analysis, the answer to this question is developed in relation to the notion of the uncanny, a key concept in understanding the imagery and structures of effect within Gothic television. In this analysis, I draw on Freudian notions of the uncanny to explain the explicit closeness which exists between the familiar and the eerie or strange within Gothic television, seeing the repetitive structures and returns of the serial television narrative as part of the narrative’s uncanniness.

⁹ E.g. his 1898 films *The Corsican Brothers*, *Photographing a Ghost*, and *Faust and Mephistopheles*.

Returning to the adaptation of Gothic literature on British television, the fourth chapter of this thesis, ‘The Female Gothic: Women, Domesticity, and the Gothic Television Adaptation’, looks in more detail at the ways in which a gendered spectator is written into adaptations of female Gothic classics such as *Rebecca*, *The Woman in White*, *The Wyvern Mystery*, and so on. In this chapter I draw out the connections between the text and the reception context by analysing the representations of domestic space in these adaptations, and by paying particular attention to the structures of identification between heroine and viewer which are laid in place by a tendency toward subjective audio-visual perspective. This shared perspective, I argue, allows for potentially illuminating points of recognition for the female viewer, in which she recognises the anxious experiences of familial trauma and feelings of domestic entrapment. As with the second and third chapters of this thesis, I also deal with the female Gothic adaptation as a hybrid text (the hybridity in this case is located in overt references to the heritage drama), and I spend some time discussing these dramas as ‘feel bad’ heritage texts which deny the more usual visual pleasures of the costume drama on television, in favour of a degraded version of the past which avoids idealised representations of the home and family.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, ‘American Gothics’, I synthesise the themes of this thesis, firstly by returning to the concerns of the opening case study and exploring the ways in which the genre allowed for the exhibition of innovations in television production in the US in the 1990s, and secondly by analysing the connection between domestic text and domestic context in the light of a particular variation of the Gothic narrative, the American Gothic. In the first part of this chapter I draw on the work of US television scholar John Thornton Caldwell, whose book-length study of ‘televisuality’ (a certain brand of television which, he argues, ‘flaunt[s] and display[s]

style... in order to gain audience share within the competitive broadcast flow' (1995, 5)) very much relates to the spectacular, effects-laden supernatural series which are taken as the object of study in this chapter. At this moment, thinking back to the work done on the British Gothic anthology drama of the 1960s and 70s. I again examine the correlation between the genre and the developments in television production, arguing that in the mid to late 1990s the representation of the supernatural allowed for experimentation and creativity in the production of television drama. This chapter is then concluded by returning to images of home and family in two of these series, *Millennium* and *American Gothic*, and the observation that the threatened domestic space and traumatised family are, in turn, central to a national Gothic narrative in the United States, pivotal in the specific identity of Gothic television, and implicated within anxieties surrounding the propriety of broadcasting the morbidity and horror of the Gothic into the homes of its viewers. Throughout this thesis then, it is the programmes which make up the corpus of Gothic television which are under scrutiny, as I track the appearance of the most domestic of genres on the most domestic of media, examining the ways in which the two houses of Gothic television come together.

Gothic fictions

The fields of study which engage in an examination of the Gothic are numerous: history, art history, musicology, architecture and landscape studies, literary theory and history, theatre studies, film studies, cultural studies, etc. Indeed, as has been argued elsewhere (cf. Botting, 1996; Edmundson, 1997; Grunenberg, 1997), the latter part of the twentieth century (and, arguably, the beginning of the twenty-first) has seen a general diffusion of the Gothic genre across a wide range of cultural sites, a relative explosion of Gothic images and narratives which has prompted a renewed critical interest in the genre. To undertake a survey of all these areas of study would be difficult within the boundaries of this project, and would necessarily involve oversimplifying numerous vigorous and contested areas of study. Therefore, it seems appropriate to concentrate here on that critical and scholarly work which has been executed on Gothic fictions, in order to produce a selective critical history of the genre and a variety of attempts to make sense of the Gothic's haunted settings (ruins, decaying houses, locked rooms and dingy attics), stock villains (murderous husbands, vampires, werewolves, ghosts, mad scientists, etc.), generic victims (terrorised heroines and doomed narrators), guilt-ridden families, secrecy, terror, horror, and the uncanny.

Whilst the field of Gothic studies has developed in a number of diverse ways (and it is hoped that the key paradigms of this field will be made clear in the following discussion), all of the material discussed in this chapter is united in the project of providing sustained, serious analyses of a genre which is, in itself, often characterised as trivial and frivolous, repressed or denigrated within the broader histories of the

media in which it is figured. As Fred Botting argues in his exhaustive introduction to Gothic studies,

by challenging the hierarchies of literary value and widening the horizons of critical study... recent critical practices have moved Gothic texts from previously marginalised sites designated as popular fiction or literary eccentricity. (1996, 17)

Whilst Botting explicitly addresses the canons of literary criticism here, we might equally apply his description to recent shifts in film and television studies, as was argued in the introduction of this thesis. As such, the majority of the criticism examined in this chapter follows a broader trend which might be described as a move from the centre to the margins, taking into account those texts which, to deploy a Gothic metaphor, no longer remain confined to the dusty attics and oubliettes of literary, film, and television theory.

Gothic literature

To begin by looking at one of the most established fields of study in Gothic fiction, a brief portrait is offered here of literary theory's account of the Gothic novel, story, and play. What follows is a chronological map of the debates surrounding Gothic literature, charting the move from the rejection of the Gothic's sensationalism (and a concurrent concern for the moral well-being of the reader), through relatively early attempts to define and catalogue the genre as a response to the realism/rationalism of the Enlightenment (and wider trends in Romanticism), via the development of both Marxist and psychoanalytic theories of what the genre might be 'working through' (and questions of its transgressive potential, or lack thereof), to more recent debates

surrounding the ways in which Gothic fictions address issues of identity and identification, with a renewed interest in readership and the potential uses and pleasures of the Gothic text. As a coda to this section, the relative dearth of critical literature on Gothic drama will also be addressed.

At its beginnings and at the height of its popularity, Gothic literature was not seen as worthy of study. The responses to the genre in cultural magazines¹ and the responses of other writers (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, for example (1797)), focused on Gothic literature as ‘bad literature’, damning its tastelessness, impropriety, and blasphemy, and rejecting the sensationalism of the Gothic as being potentially damaging to all exposed to it. As David Punter notes, the Gothic was initially seen as ‘crude, exploitative, even sadistic, [in] that it pandered to the worst popular taste of its time’ (1980, 9). The increasingly popular Gothic novel and play in the latter decades of the eighteenth century (the 1790s might be seen as the defining decade of Gothic fiction), which on the one hand were not taken seriously, were, on the other hand, simultaneously afforded a kind of corruptive power, particularly over the female reader or theatregoer who was seen as ‘at risk’ from these texts. During this period, contemporaneous criticism took on a paternalist stance, in that it configured the role of the literary critic as that of protector, saving the threatened and innocent reader from themselves (or at least from their choice of reading material). As such, this early response to Gothic fiction ironically prefigures later critical interest in the genre, in that it establishes a particular concern with the way that the Gothic text might have a negative effect on its reader, although later critics saw the Gothic’s potential to corrupt in a far more positive light. Just as, in the twentieth century, critics would consider the potential transgressiveness of the Gothic text as desirable rather than threatening (see

Jackson, 1981; Botting, 1996; Palmer, 1999; Becker, 1999). though often concluding, as do Jackson and Botting, that this transgression within Gothic literature is ultimately unsuccessful, in the eighteenth century the Gothic genre's threat of destabilising societal norms and values was also central to rather more fearful critical responses. This early construction of the corruptive Gothic text and the innocent, threatened consumer of the Gothic is also particularly enlightening in relation to later reactions to Gothic film and television in the popular press as immoral or corruptive (see chapters two and five of this thesis for a discussion of these kinds of reactions to Gothic television); as with these later audio-visual renderings of the Gothic narrative, perhaps the popularity and accessibility of the Gothic text came about in direct relation to its denigration and its (supposed) potential to corrupt its readers and, later, its viewers.

Aside from these early vitriolic attacks on the genre in literary journals and in the popular press, it was not until the intervention of psychoanalysis at the beginning of the twentieth century that the Gothic was given any further sustained critical consideration. It was Sigmund Freud's 1919 essay on 'The Uncanny' (Freud, 1990) which brought to light the potential 'affective-ness' of Gothic fiction (the potential to disturb, or give its reader an uncanny feeling), as well as viewing uncanniness as an actual sensation experienced by his analysands. The uncanny would later be seen as one of the key elements of Gothic fiction, and thus Freud's article can be seen as a seminal piece of criticism on the literary Gothic, as much as it is an establishing moment in psychoanalytic theory; indeed, Freud draws on E.T.A. Hoffman's Gothic story 'The Sandman' as the central text under discussion, rather than referring to any particular analysand. In this article Freud offers a definition of uncanniness by firstly surveying the meanings of the words *heimlich* and *unheimlich* (and how these

¹ For example, an anonymous article entitled 'On the corruption of the female reader' in the *Scots*

meanings have changed and shifted over the course of time). and then listing 'all those properties of persons, things, sense-impressions, experiences, and situations which arose in us the feeling of uncanniness' (ibid., 340). This cataloguing of the uncanny (which would later be taken up by those working towards a definition of Gothic literature) draws on literary texts as well as the author's own opinion of sensations experienced in everyday life.

Whilst it is not possible here to offer a sustained analysis of Freud's essay and its implications for the study of Gothic fictions (a more in depth analysis of the impact of this essay is indeed offered in chapter three of this thesis, in relation to the uncanny hospital drama, *Riget*), Freud's central proposition about the nature of the uncanny Gothic text needs to be outlined at this point: precisely, the notion that '[t]he uncanny is that class of frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar' (ibid., 340). Through this proposition, Freud isolates the congruence in Gothic fictions of that which is both familiar and strange, known and unknown, in producing a sense of fear, noting the destruction of boundaries between the imagined and the real in the Gothic text. As Freud scrutinises the relation between the fictional and the real, he concludes that the uncanny sensation can only be achieved through a disturbance in an essentially realist text, rather than that text which is somehow couched in the realm of the fantastic or marvellous, thus challenging the depiction of the Gothic as an inherently anti-realist genre: in Freud's analysis, the uncanny Gothic text is essentially realist by its very definition.

It is this relationship between the imagined and the real which can be located within the dialogue surrounding Gothic television (cf. Ledwon, 1993; Probyn, 1993); indeed, the juxtapositioning of the everyday and the frightening in the Gothic text is a

central concept in this thesis, in that it accounts for the potential of the Gothic drama as broadcast in the home to play on the familiarity of the domestic reception context in producing its lucid sense of the uncanny. Whereas other critics locate this juxtapositioning within the context of the broadcast flow of television, contrasting the uncanny (Probyn, 1993) or the horrific (Waller, 1987b) with the more benign, everyday moments of the television schedules (particularly advertising), it is the proposition of this thesis that the familiar of the uncanny drama is also located within Gothic television's insistent reference to the domestic space, and its textual acknowledgement of its contexts of reception. Freud's definition of the uncanny text is therefore greatly influential in the study of the Gothic as a fictional genre, in that it lays the groundwork for the appearance and structure of later analyses, allowing for a discussion of sensation or feeling (in readership/spectatorship) and an examination of fictional tropes/images to exist side by side. It is also the first sustained analysis of Gothic fiction that centralises the importance of the domestic in the genre (the 'heimlich' or 'homely' in Freud's terms), and thus is of central importance to the work done on Gothic television in this thesis. Later discussions of the domestic in Gothic literature also build on this defining moment of criticism; for example, Fred Botting's categorisation of nineteenth century versions of the Gothic novel as the 'homely Gothic' (1996, 113-134), a transformation which, he argues, was evoked in North American fiction by the lack of traditional Gothic trappings (castles, ruins, abbeys, etc.) in the New World, and, in Britain, by the increasingly bourgeois sensibilities of the nation, is inspired precisely by Freud's discussion of the internal terrors of the uncanny.

The impact of psychoanalysis on the critical evaluation of Gothic literature was not immediately evident, however (though, as discussed below, psychoanalytic theory

would play a key role in developing the central paradigms of Gothic study in the latter part of the twentieth century). For some time, even after the intervention of psychoanalysis, there still remained little critical consideration of the Gothic as a genre of fiction, aside from scant discussion of the genre in general works on literature, and, particularly, the novel; as a genre it was still not seen as important or weighty enough to warrant serious critical attention, and its popularity was to continue to debase the Gothic in the eyes of literary critics. However, from the 1920s onward, the important process of critical definition of the genre was begun, when a number of key works such as Edith Birkhead's *The Tale of Terror: A Study of the Gothic Romance* (1921) and later M.S. Tompkins' *The Popular Novel in England 1770-1800* (1932) were published. These early attempts to catalogue certain themes and images which could be isolated as Gothic, whilst still providing a focus on the question of the genre's literary merit, worked toward solidifying an understanding of what the genre's main characteristics were. Furthermore, from the 1930s onwards, more favourable accounts of the Gothic began to appear, focusing on the genre as a specific literary movement related to Romanticism (located in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries), charting its rise and impact on later literary forms, and defining the genre as a response to the rationalism of Enlightenment literature and thinking (cf. Summers, 1938; Varma, 1957; Thompson, 1974). This insistence on the antithetical status of the genre establishes one of the central paradigms of Gothic theory: that the Gothic often appears as a response to reason, order, and an insistence on the real, rational, or scientific worlds. Just as Freud's discussion of the uncanny relates to later theories of Gothic television (in that the uncanny relies upon being situated with the familiar for its effect), so representing the Gothic as the antithesis of Enlightenment rationalism prefigures discussion of the ways in which the Gothic text fits into the broadcast flow

of television, as response to television's identity as a mimetic and informative medium, producing drama which is, or ought to be, inherently realistic or naturalistic. Such a debate inspires an image of Gothic television as the underside of television drama, as a response to a dominant realist aesthetic/narrative.

Out of the aforementioned definitions of the literary Gothic grew a wealth of critical literature on Gothic fiction in the latter part of the twentieth century, which built upon the foundations of this earlier work. Initially, this criticism developed in two strands, following Marxist and Freudian thinking to examine the ways in which, respectively, the terrors/horrors of the Gothic text expressed either wider, collective anxieties relating to issues of power and rebellion in society, or more personal/individual anxieties abounding in the fears and desires of the unconscious. A key example of the former is found in Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960), a broader work on American fiction which takes up the project of cataloguing Gothic tropes and effects in a wide ranging study of the novel, providing an innovatory analysis of the genre from a Marxist perspective. Fiedler's analysis situates the Gothic novel as a text of its time (as a fiction of socio-historical significance), stating 'that the class-relations of a culture help determine the shape of its deepest fantasies, the obsessive concerns of its [Gothic] literature' (1960, 14). Rather than taking up a psychoanalytic approach to this literature then, universalising the reader's inherent or implied fear and/or paranoia as Freud's work on the uncanny had done, Fiedler seeks to establish a vision of the ways in which Gothic literature expresses the fears and desires of a collective consciousness based on class relations in an industrialised capitalist society, therefore historicising his reading of this literature. Taking the work of Charles Brockden Brown as his example, Fiedler is particularly

interested in the way in which the American Gothic novel transposes issues of class onto issues of race:

In the American gothic... the heathen, unredeemed wilderness and not the decaying monuments of a dying class... becomes the symbol of evil... Similarly, not the aristocrat but the Indian, not the dandified courtier but the savage coloured man is postulated as the embodiment of villainy. (1960, 160)

Here, Fiedler situates the obsessive concerns of Gothic literature with the threat of the Native American as social other, arguing that Brown's oeuvre works through anxieties about class and race which are specific to a particular period in US history. As such, Fiedler's work also prefigures those critical analyses, discussed below, which focus on the issue of racial monstrosity (cf. Winter, 1992; Malchow, 1996).

Whilst this work is persuasive, later theoretical discussions of the genre clearly find the lack of emphasis in Fiedler's analysis on the individual's psychological relationship to the Gothic text problematic, thus choosing to combine a Marxist approach with an interest in the psychological structures at play in the Gothic text. David Punter, in *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day* (1980), combines both approaches in a wide ranging survey of Gothic literature, to depict the ways in which 'Gothic fiction becomes a process of cultural self-analysis, and images which it throws up become the dream figures of a troubled social group' (ibid., 425). Looking back to Freudian notions of the uncanny, Punter offers a detailed description of the concurrent realist and fantastic strands of Gothic literature, and also makes use of other terms within the lexicon of psychoanalysis (delirium, taboo) to describe the reader's relationship to the Gothic text; for example, taboo, as Punter understands it, is a dialectical term which describes the way in which

Gothic fiction oscillates between ‘attraction and repulsion, worship and condemnation’ (ibid. 410). On the other hand, Punter also makes sense of the phenomenon of the Gothic by examining class-specific anxieties around power and rebellion, noting that ‘the period which saw the birth of the Gothic novel was that in which the early forces of industrialisation were producing vast changes in the way people lived and worked’ (ibid. 413), arguing that ultimately, the Gothic can be understood as a literature of alienation. Similarly, Franco Moretti (1983) would also adopt this dual focus of Marxist and psychoanalytic theory in a sustained analysis of the Frankenstein and Dracula narratives in Gothic fiction, exploring the ways in which the two monsters represented societal fears of ‘[the] wretch and the ruthless proprietor, the worker and capital’ (ibid., 83), as well as more universal fears based around the return of repressed libido or desire. What we might take from these latter analyses is their dual emphasis on both the individual and the social, thinking particularly about the ways in which, for example, the anxieties expressed around domestic space and the marital experience in the female Gothic adaptation are at once structured as individual paranoidias relating to questions of maturity and individuation for the young women at the centre of the narrative, and, at the same time, stem from fears evoked by the gender roles enforced by the broader social institutions of the family and domestic ideology. This observation is also made by Kate Ferguson-Ellis (1989), who argues that the female Gothic novel dramatises social relations and the potentially imprisoning qualities of the domestic space under capitalism, whilst simultaneously representing the young heroine’s personal move towards individuality/autonomy.

In keeping with the reading of the Gothic text as a product of its social and historical context, and as a critical reassessment of the earlier work of Montague Summers (1938) et al, Rosemary Jackson’s study, *Fantasy: The Literature of*

Subversion (1981) centralises the question of whether the Gothic text (as a sub-genre of fantasy literature) can be seen as radical or subversive. She reappraises the proposition that the Gothic novel brought to light unreason and terror in the face of a rational, ordered society, both at the moment of its birth (i.e. post-Enlightenment) and later, in the turbulent period of industrialisation, drawing on Foucauldian theory (particularly *Madness and Civilisation* (1989)) to suggest that at a time of extreme order and reason there must conversely be a wealth of interest in the abstract unreason of the Gothic text. However, through a close analysis of the texts themselves, Jackson ultimately reaches the conclusion that the Gothic cannot be seen as a truly radical genre, in that the potential of the unspeakable (rebellion, disorder, and chaos) is nearly always negated at the end of these narratives, or that the heavily coded rebellion of the metaphorical Gothic narrative is far too shady/ambiguous to successfully represent true subversion or radicalism. As Fred Botting notes in his later introductory history of the Gothic genre, transgression can, in fact, be seen as a normative process, whereby ‘crossing the social and aesthetic limits, serves to reinforce or underline their value and necessity, restoring or defining limits’ (1996, 7). As was stated earlier in this chapter, the Gothic text’s potentially transgressive nature has developed as one of the central questions in the scholarship of Gothic literature, and this is also an issue which the fourth chapter of this thesis, on the adaptation of female Gothic literature television, has taken up. However, this analysis of female Gothic television and text-viewer identification identifies transgressiveness as a process of exposure or ‘working through’ of anxiety, rather than a radical call to disorder and rebellion, concurring with Jackson that it would be over-stretching the potential of this connectivity to deem it radically rebellious.

It was the development of feminist literary criticism, and an ensuing interest in both women writers and women's experience, which brought about the greatest growth in the field of Gothic literary studies. However, informed by psychoanalytic theory, Ellen Moers' groundbreaking study, *Literary Women* (1978), was one of the first texts to analyse the female Gothic as a sub-genre of Gothic literature, examining fears surrounding women's sexual identity and experience of maternity/childbirth. Developing on this work, and particularly influenced by Nancy Chodorow's psychology of the female Oedipal experience (1978), feminist theorists in the latter decades of the twentieth century explored the issues of gender identity in the Gothic text by focusing on the representations of the male villain and female victim and/or madwoman within the genre, investigating issues of individuation, identification, and masochism in female readership of the Gothic (cf. Showalter, 1977; Kahane, 1985; DeLamotte, 1990; Fleenor, 1990; Heller, 1992; Massé, 1992; Williams, 1995). This attention to reader identification in feminist literary theory also came out of a renewed interest in the Gothic as a popular genre, beginning with Joanna Russ's 1973 essay 'Someone's Trying to Kill Me and I Think It's My Husband' (1993), and later located in Tania Modleski's 1982 study *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass Produced Fantasies for Women* (1982a), both of which sought to conflate the paranoid identity of both reader and heroine in the pulp Gothic novel, and located a masochistic drive in both consumer and subject of this fiction in relation to their domestic surroundings and their significant other (i.e. the Byronic anti-hero or domineering husband). A fuller discussion of the formation of this particular branch of study in Gothic literature, looking at the sub-Genre which has been variously titled as the female Gothic, woman's Gothic, or paranoid Gothic, is given in chapter four of this thesis in relation to my own proposal that Gothic television also encourages a strong sense of

identification between female viewer and text, playing on the doubling of domestic space in Gothic television (the homes of the heroine on screen, and the homes in which, it is supposed, the drama is being viewed).

Also in the 1990s, literary theorists interested in race and the post-colonial experience began to think about the construction of the racial 'other' and racially-identified monstrosity in the Gothic text (e.g. Winter, 1992; Malchow, 1996) and, similarly, queer theorists also focussed on the notion of otherness in the Gothic text, exploring depictions of sexual identity in the classic Gothic novel (see Halberstam, 1995), as well as exploring the ways in which the genre had been appropriated by gay and lesbian writers, relating back to the identification of the Gothic as a potentially radical genre (e.g. Palmer, 1999). In the last decade the boundaries of the genre have continued to shift in relation to this burgeoning body of Gothic criticism, as new and rediscovered texts are brought to light, with a focus on class, race, gender, and sexuality producing the most interesting and sustained analyses of Gothic fiction in recent times. In addition, in response to the fact that Gothic texts (and, indeed, whole courses on the genre) now appear on syllabi in schools and universities, a number of useful collections on the genre have been produced, from critical overviews (Botting, 1996), to encyclopaedias (Mulvey-Roberts, 1998) and collections of essays which offer a survey of the last two hundred years of Gothic literary criticism (Bloom, 1998).

In contrast to this growing field of Gothic literary studies which concentrates, on the whole, on the analysis of the Gothic novel, there have been very few studies of the Gothic theatre. Paul Ranger's, *'Terror and Pity Reign in Every Breast': Gothic Drama in the London Patent Theatres, 1750-1820* (1991) is the only book-length examination of the highly popular Gothic dramas which were contemporaneous with the popularity of the Gothic novel in Britain, and takes as its project the reconstruction

of the history of the Gothic play, discussing the origins, production, and reception of these performances. Ranger's work is illuminating for this thesis in that he documents the creation of special effects, by the patent theatres' machinists, whereby the supernatural could be visually represented, prefiguring the traditions of the spectacular Gothic in both the cinema and on television. Furthermore, Ranger also provides a commentary on both the popularity of these theatrical spectacles of the horror-Gothic tradition (à la M.G. Lewis's *The Castle Spectre* (1797), or *The Vampyre* (1820) by James Robinson Planché), and the ensuing disapproval of these works from 'polite society':

Georgian audiences were doubtful about the propriety of the appearance of spectres. Matthew Gregory Lewis introduced ghosts into a number of his plays, and each was heavily criticised. This rejection was at odds with the importance devoted to the supernatural in other media. Henry Fuseli's paintings of supernatural beings were acclaimed and gothic romances such as *The Castle of Ontranto* [1764] which allowed the paranormal full rein were popular. (Ranger 1991, 75)

It therefore appears, in Ranger's account of the Gothic drama, that whereas pictorial or literary representations of ghosts and spirits were acceptable in that they allowed a certain amount of distance to be kept between the spectator and the spectre, 'bringing them to life' on stage was seen as improper in some way. Ranger's commentary on the Gothic dramas of the London Patent theatres therefore attests to the longevity of the arguments surrounding the audio-visual adaptation of the Gothic text and its potential indecency, arguments which would surface again when the genre was transferred to television (as discussed in chapter two of this thesis).

The only other form of Gothic theatre that has been afforded any critical attention is the theatre of the Grand Guignol, originating in turn of the century Paris. Mel Gordon's history of the Grand Guignol (1997) offers a biography of this sub-genre of Gothic theatre, as well as gathering together photographic documentation and a number of scripts, creating a vivid picture of what might be considered as the origins of Gothic horror in film and television. Whilst, as is discussed in the following section of this chapter, other scholars have looked at Gothic theatre as an antecedent to cinematic versions of the genre's central narratives (Huss (1972) and Skal (1991) both discuss theatrical versions of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, for example), there is a great deal more work to be done in this area of Gothic studies.

Gothic Cinema

Whereas studies of the literary Gothic have been in some degree of agreement over those texts which may be considered as Gothic, the study of Gothic film has, on the other hand, been characterised by a consistent disagreement over the moments or movements in cinema history which share the visual and/or narrative features of the Gothic, a disparity which is also emphasised by the different national traditions of Gothic cinema examined within the academy. However, running through this work is an interest in questions of medium specificity and the relationship between Gothic cinema and other forms of Gothic fiction (particularly Gothic literature). As with the study of Gothic literature, the study of Gothic film has also been instigated by the desire to reveal the 'underside' of more mainstream traditions of filmmaking, looking at the Gothic film as antithetical to more 'respectable' cycles within a variety of national cinemas. It should be noted here that the following description of Gothic film

studies does not offer an exhaustive review of all of the critical literature on the horror film (this is a large and ever expanding body of work). but rather concentrates specifically on those pieces of film scholarship dealing directly with the notion of the Gothic or the uncanny in cinema.

One of the earliest discussions of the cinematic Gothic, written in 1966, came in the form of Stephen Farber's essay 'The New American Gothic' (1972) which defined those texts, such as *Lilith* (Robert Rossen, USA 1964), *Hush, Hush Sweet Charlotte* (Robert Aldrich, USA 1964), and *Inside Daisy Clover* (Robert Mulligan, USA 1965) as sharing 'arresting distortions in mood and cinematic technique' (ibid.. 95). Farber describes these films as Gothic under the following terms:

all of these films deal, directly or indirectly, with horror, often with absolutes of Evil... This suggestion of demonic or nightmarish menace, often in the setting of lush, ominous decay... supplies a crucial thematic resonance in these Gothic films... [which share] a very distinctive kind of baroque and self-conscious expressionism, relying on unusually over-ripe, even violent visual exaggerations and refractions. (ibid.)

Farber's analysis highlights certain visual elements of these films as Gothic (such as black costumes and props, 'weird' lighting and camera angles designed to discompose the audience, exaggerated shadows, large, asymmetrical setting and composition, etc.) and asserts that the New American Gothic in film is characterised by a certain tension between a glossy surface and degraded interior, both through mise-en-scène and characterisation. As such, Farber's analysis proposes the Gothic as a visual mode, using his description of the Gothic aesthetic or 'Gothicness' to group together a cycle of films which might otherwise be seen as disparate in their subject matter. Farber therefore deals with the notion of Gothic mood, stylistic excess and baroque-ness

within the cinema, whilst discussing films which the marketers and distributors did not previously identify as Gothic. a fact which has some resonance with my own critical construction of the Gothic genre on television. as discussed in the introduction of this thesis. Of course, the irony of Farber's intervention is that whilst he describes a *New American Gothic* in cinema, little critical work had yet been done on the 'old' Gothic in the movies (particularly the output of Universal Studios in the 1930s). but these analyses were soon to follow.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many of the analyses of the Gothic in Hollywood cinema have focused on the adaptation of Gothic literary classics, most notably Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). An early example, published in the same collection as Farber's essay, is Roy Huss's 'Vampire's Progress: *Dracula* from Novel to Film via Broadway' (1972), which discusses medium specificity in the representation of Gothic fictions on film in the United States. As stated in the introduction of section, medium specificity, or how to translate the gore of Gothic horror and the chilling suggestiveness of Gothic terror to audio-visual renderings of the genre, has been a focal question for studies of Gothic cinema, and, indeed, provides the focus of the following chapter of this thesis in relation to the Gothic television anthology series of the 1960s and 70s. In Huss's analysis, for example, he criticises Todd Browning's 1931 version of *Dracula* for being too theatrical and therefore un-cinematic, stating that the film owes too much to Balderston and Deane's 1927 New York stage adaptation of the novel. Huss argues that Browning 'seems to regard the frame of his camera's viewfinder merely as a proscenium arch to be filled with performers and background décor' (ibid., 51), a criticism which resonates with the critical denigration of early television drama (see chapter two of this thesis). Furthermore, he suggests that the moments in which

Browning's film does become 'cinematic' are distinctly linked to its literary heritage: two parallel close-ups are given of Dracula and Mina, whereby the character's face slides down off the lower left hand of the frame at the moment of biting/blood-lust, are perhaps inspired by the need in the audio-visual rendering of the Gothic to 'show less, and suggest more'. According to Huss, techniques of suggestion must be developed in order for the Gothic to be successful in the cinema, thus prefiguring my own suggestion that early Gothic television looked for ways in which to translate restraint of its literary heritage to television, using oblique techniques of shooting and editing to imply the presence of the supernatural within the boundaries of the screen. Like Huss, David J. Skal's *Hollywood Gothic* (1991), a later cultural history of the Dracula narrative, also traces the roots of filmic adaptation of the novel through its theatrical versions.

Another extensive history of the aesthetic heritages of Gothic on film is offered in S. S. Praver's *Caligari's Children: The Film as Tale of Terror* (1980). While Praver does not apply the label 'Gothic' to describe the films in his study, preferring the term 'Terror Film', he describes the characteristics of the terror genre using the terminology of the Gothic. Praver's analysis focuses on the feelings/sensations that these texts set to inspire in their audience (just as Freud's examination of the uncanny did), and indeed one of the central chapters of this book is dedicated to an analysis of the uncanny in cinema. Like Huss, Praver is also interested in medium specificity and the particular heritages of Gothic cinema, in that he seeks to define the central differences between the tales of terror in the literary, theatrical, and cinematic genres. However, he simultaneously attempts to outline multiple heritages of the Gothic on film in Hollywood and other national cinemas, looking towards the phantasmagorias of 18th century Paris, tales of terror on the theatrical stage, and Georges Méliès' trick

films of the late 19th and early 20th century for the genesis of the Terror film.

Therefore, in defining the Terror film, Prawer draws on a wealth of audio-visual representations of the Gothic, to move towards a particular aesthetic that we may now recognise as the cinematic Gothic.

The other major cycle of American cinema which has been considered as belonging to this genre is the Gothic woman's film of the 1940s. Whilst there have been a number of scholarly articles dealing with this sub-genre (cf. Modleski, 1982b; Waldman, 1983; Gallafent, 1988; Walker, 1990; Hollinger, 1993; Fletcher, 1995; Hanson, 2000), Mary Ann Doane's *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (1987a) is perhaps the most sustained analysis. Doane's interest is in female spectatorship and her analysis configures the female moviegoer as an excessive, desiring viewer. Whilst constructing this 'over-involved' female audience, she locates the Gothic in the paranoid cycle of films of the 1940s (e.g. *Rebecca* (Alfred Hitchcock, USA 1940), or *The Spiral Staircase* (Robert Siodmak, USA 1946)) which, she argues, utilises many of the visual and narrative tropes of the genre to instil a sense of unease in the spectator. As with other Gothic film studies, Doane is also interested in medium specificity and the question of how cinema can fully visualise tropes of the Gothic, and asks how the process of looking relates to the Gothic text when the female Gothic novel is more capable of expressing interiority/thought.

Doane relates this cycle to the women's Gothic paperback as discussed by Tania Modleski (1982a), stating that these cinematic texts allow the female spectator to confront her fears and desires, and her inherent paranoia. As a result of this conflation of female heroine and female viewer, Doane centralises the domestic as a site of horror in the paranoid Gothic woman's film of the 1940s, just as Elspeth Probyn's analysis of the female television viewer would do some years later (as

discussed below). As such, Doane's eloquent depiction of the home as an uncanny space and a site of great anxiety is also a key precursor to my own analysis of the female Gothic adaptation on television.

More recently, there have been a number of horror film 'readers' which have, in part, taken up the discussion of the Gothic in North American cinema. Collections such as Ken Gelder's *The Horror Reader* (2000) and Mark Jancovich's *Horror: The Film Reader* (2002) have variously dealt with the Gothic as a nationally-specific brand of the horror film (see Gelder's section entitled 'American Gothic' (2000, 253-272)), relating this sub-genre to wider traditions of Gothic fiction and iconography in North American culture, and as the subject of empirical audience research (see Brigid Cherry, 'Refusing to refuse to look: Female viewers of the horror film' (2002), in Jancovich), dealing with Gothic cinema as group of texts with very specific set of viewing practices for the female viewer. Cherry's work is particularly illuminating in that her empirical research found that the pleasure of watching Gothic horror films for the women in her survey was very firmly identified with the pleasures of consuming the heritage text/costume drama:

For many viewers, the appeal of vampirism seems to be tied into a romanticism of the past. The taste for Gothic horror is often linked to a liking for historical and costume dramas, with Hammer and other horror films providing a key source of images for this imagined past, which one 23-year old respondent described as "a stylish image of dark beauty...

The classically Gothic full-length dresses and cloaks, the numerous high-ceilinged rooms full of dark wood and velvet curtains are now, without a doubt for me synonymous with grace and charm". (ibid., 172)

Whilst the methodological design of this thesis does not include empirical audience research, Cherry's findings would seem to confirm the proposal (offered in chapters two and four of this thesis) that the adapted Gothic drama is closely related to the heritage text. However, whereas Cherry's research finds the pleasures of the Gothic drama indistinct from that of the more usual costume drama, my own analysis isolates key points of difference between the two genres, suggesting that these pleasures are undercut or denied in some way within the Gothic adaptation on television.

In other national cinemas, the Gothic tradition has, in fact, been even more thoroughly ignored by the academy, with a few notable exceptions. For example, German Expressionism has been seen as a key source of the Gothic, with diverse scholars locating this trend in both the mise-en-scène and architectural design of films such as *Der Golem, wie er in die Welt kam* (Paul Wegener, Germany 1920) and *Der Müde tod* (Fritz Lang, Germany 1921) (cf. Lotte Eisner, 1969), and in the deeper narrative structures of this movement (Paul Coates (1991), for example, concentrates on the appearance of the uncanny in German Expressionist cinema). The critical analysis of the Gothic horror film as an important cycle within British cinema has also been sporadic and disjointed (compared, for example, to the more established bodies of scholarship on the social-realist tradition in British cinema or, more recently, the heritage film), meaning that the focus of much of the work which exists on the British Gothic film has been the rediscovery of the auteurs and studios involved in this cycle, as well as analyses of the films themselves. Looking back to the previous analysis of Gothic literary studies, this process of rediscovery can be equated to the work of Birkhead (1921), Summers (1938), Varma (1957), et al. which set out to unearth a previously undefined body of Gothic fiction which had all but been ignored by the academy. Furthermore, this rediscovery is also comparable to one of the central

projects of this thesis: to define and analyse a previously unrecognised tradition of television drama. On British cinema, this work was inaugurated by David Pirie's *A Heritage of Horror: The English Gothic Cinema 1946-1972* (1973), which offers the reader an extended discussion of the Gothic output of the Hammer studio and some other notable examples of British horror cinema of the period. Contra to the more usual depiction of British cinema as the realm of kitchen-sink realism and anodyne costume dramas, Pirie maps out a place for a gory, Grand Guignol tradition of British film. As such, Pirie's book acts as a revisionist history of the Gothic tradition in Britain, depicting it as a genre of gory and spectacular visual display rather than allusion and suggestion, and arguing for the respectability of this tradition. Furthermore, this study also revises the history of British cinema, in that Pirie brings the significance of the Gothic cinematic genre to critical light for the first time, rediscovering many of the 'auteurs' of British Gothic cinema (Fisher, Francis, Hamer, Cavalcanti, etc.). In some ways, the second chapter of this thesis embarks on a similar project to Pirie's, rediscovering a tradition of the Gothic on British television which was fairly widespread and popular (and, in part, related to the concurrent popularity of the Gothic cinema in Britain in the 1960s and 70s), but which, until now, has failed to receive any scholarly attention.

Despite Pirie's attempt to bring a widespread tradition of British filmmaking to light however, it was another twenty years until Peter Hutchings (1993) took up Pirie's call for further work to be done on the Gothic in British cinema. Hutchings furthered the study of this genre in the UK by situating his analyses more carefully in a social and industrial context, arguing that the British Gothic filmic tradition reflected era-specific concerns surrounding issues of masculinity, authority, and the family: indeed, Hutchings would later argue that Pirie had somewhat misrepresented British Gothic

cinema, characterising the cycle through an over-emphasis on the Hammer studios, and ignoring the distinctiveness of the output of the Amicus studios, for example (see Hutchings, 2002). Of particular interest to this thesis is Hutchings' work on the different forms of familial authority (maternal and paternal) reflected in the films of the Hammer studio and others. Informed by psychoanalytic theory, Hutchings argues that setting British Gothic films in the past allows for an exploration of the 'psychological effects of the family structure' (1993, 167), away from the familiarity of the more recognisable modern world. This argument, that the issues of family anxiety and familial power relations are central to British Gothic cinema because they are also central to the individual unconscious, might suggest that the following reading of Gothic television as a domestic form of a domestic genre taps into deeper, psychological structures concerning the home and family. Whilst this thesis is not informed by psychoanalysis in the same way as Hutchings' analysis of British Gothic cinema is, it identifies similar concerns about issues of power and authority within the parameters of the domestic space.

The other key addition to the field of British Gothic film studies has been Steve Chibnall and Julian Petley's collection, *British Horror Cinema* (2002a), which, they argue, builds on the work of Pirie and Hutchings by offering a number of key contextual analyses. They are 'concerned not simply with films as texts but with the institutions and discourses within which those texts are produced, circulated, regulated and consumed' (2002b, 3), and introduce new work on British horror cinema looking at key studios (e.g. Amicus), directors (e.g. Pete Walker and Clive Barker), and sub-genres of the Gothic cycle (the psycho-thriller, the occult horror film).

A relatively new avenue in the field of Gothic film studies can be located in some of the most recent work done on the pre-history of cinema. For example,

Laurent Mannoni (2000), Tom Gunning (2001), and Terry Castle (1995) have all noted that Gothic images (devils, spirits, ghostly nuns, etc.) were perhaps the most prevalent of subject matter for early projection technologies (such as the magic lantern and the Phantasmagoria), and were in fact used precisely to showcase innovations in technologies of representation. A more thorough discussion of this work is provided in the introduction of this thesis, but it is worth reiterating here that this discussion of the relationship between the genre and new media technologies has been influential in relation to my own examination of Gothic showcasing and the demonstration of innovation in television production through the representation of the supernatural (as discussed in chapters two and five of this thesis). It is hoped that this necessarily brief history of Gothic film studies demonstrates both the diversity of texts considered as key examples of Gothic fiction within audio-visual culture, as well as the variety of critical approaches towards this material. As with my analysis of Gothic television, many of these explorations of Gothic cinema have focused on questions of medium-specificity and the relationship between technology of the cinema and the genre. Furthermore, these studies also tend to follow certain trends in film studies (such as the recent increased interest in early cinema, or the revision of histories of British cinema), finding examples of the Gothic in a wide variety of historical and national contexts.

Gothic television²

As stated in the introduction to this review of literature, there has been very little scholarly work done on Gothic television. However, from 1980 onwards, some of the

more general accounts of Gothic fictions have described a widespread diffusion of the mode into areas other than literature and film (cf. Botting, 1996; Edmundson, 1997; Grunenberg, 1997; Davenport-Hines, 1998), with television noted as an important new location for the Gothic. Nevertheless, whilst noting the appearance of Gothic fictions and imagery on television, none of these studies have offered a sustained analysis of the genre as produced for this medium, and thus they call for an examination which, it is hoped, this thesis will go some way to providing. The work which has been undertaken in this area, as with Gothic film studies, is highly indecisive about the kinds of texts which may be considered Gothic; programmes as diverse as chat shows and the news have been described as Gothic, or at least as having Gothic elements. It therefore becomes apparent that the label Gothic, when applied to the television text, is used to identify either those programmes which utilise a particularly Gothic narrative form, which feature key figures and/or events which are associated with the genre (e.g. the victim-heroine and villainous anti-hero, or the presence of a disturbing secret from the past), or those which 'look Gothic', which exploit key elements of the Gothic image repertoire, and which are visually characterised by a certain darkness or gloominess. As was suggested in the introduction, it is those programmes that feature a combination of these elements which this thesis is primarily concerned with.

The first instance of a (brief) discussion of Gothic Television is found in S. S. Praver's book on the Gothic Terror film (1980) (discussed above), in which he notes the importance of television within the cycle of films in his study, and suggests that the medium has 'evolved its own variations' (ibid., 20) of the terror film for the smaller screen.

² Other terms, such as 'Horror' or 'Terror' television have also been used to describe the genre - I therefore include in this section of the review of literature analyses of horror and terror television which do not explicitly identify the programmes in hand as Gothic.

Examples are legion; they range from ghost-stories based on the tales of M.R. James or specially written by Robert Muller and others to TV movies like Dan Curtis's *The Night Stalker*... The continuities between such works and the old B movies are not only thematic: they are made under similar restraints of money, location, and shooting time, though flexible and sophisticated technical equipment, specially adapted to the lower definition of the TV screen is apt to disguise this. (ibid.)

This notion, that television has developed a medium-specific Gothic drama, is of central importance to this thesis, and Prawer points towards the anthologised ghost story (such as *Ghost Story for Christmas* (M.R. James adaptations) and *Mystery and Imagination* (featuring the writing of Robert Muller)), as discussed in the following chapter of this thesis, as a particularly prominent example of Gothic television.

Furthermore, by drawing parallels between the production conditions of low budget cinema and television in the 1960s and 70s, Prawer highlights the relationship between the development of the Gothic on television and the development of new/innovative production technologies, a relationship which is explored later in this thesis (in chapters two and five particularly). He suggests that television as a medium is responsible for 'the rediscovery of avant-garde devices - violently clashing images, unusual angles of vision, frozen frames, shooting through gauze, negative prints, etc.' (ibid., 21), and, whilst he describes a slightly more visually exciting version of Gothic television than was actually or usually seen on the screen, Prawer draws the reader's attention to the innovative techniques which were utilised to enable the visualisation of the supernatural within the Gothic anthology series of the 1960s. In making this observation, Prawer initiates a discussion of Gothic television that also prefigures, for

example, more recent analyses of the relationship between the genre and innovation in early cinema as described above (cf. Castle. 1995: Mannoni, 2000: Gunning. 2001).

The third point which Prawer makes about the tale of terror on television, almost in passing, is that the television viewing position is of central importance to the reception of terror/the Gothic on this medium, suggesting that the viewer's response will be '*significantly conditioned* [my emphasis] by the domestic setting in which they - unlike cinema goers - watch such works' (1980, 20). This notion, that the domestic setting is instrumental in producing the medium-specific sensations of terror and uncanniness in the television viewer, is a key strand in the analysis of Gothic television which would be picked up again by other scholars writing on Gothic television in the 1990s, and, as I have already argued, is an issue which is central to this thesis.

While Prawer's preliminary thoughts on the position of the Gothic or Terror text on television would seem to call for a lengthier analysis, the following years did not produce such an inquiry. Rather, just as Gothic fictions on television seemed to decline in popularity during this decade (the 1980s), so scholarly interest in the genre failed to develop. What little discussion there was during this period was centred on the horror series/tele-film in the United States as an inferior relation to the horror film on theatrical release, and the medium's inability to produce a truly satisfying horror story. For example, in Stephen King's overview of horror culture in the US, *Danse Macabre* (1981), he expresses a negative view of the possibilities of producing these types of programmes for television (ironic, given the popularity of adaptations of King's work on US television later in the 1980s and 90s), mainly due to the censorial restraints of commercial studio production, stating that the restrained, 'show less, suggest more' ghost story which Prawer had seen as exemplary of the best kind of

Gothic fiction on the medium, fails to compete with the real horrors shown on television news programmes.

Horror has not fared particularly well on TV, if you except something like the 6 o'clock news, where footage of black GIs with their legs blown off, villages and kids on fire, bodies in trenches, and whole swatches of jungle being coated with good old Agent Orange... it is very difficult to write a successful horror story in a world which is so full of real horrors.

A ghost in the turret room of a Scottish castle just cannot compete....

(ibid., 212-3)

According to King then, the suggestive, non-gory style of Gothic television, which characterised some of the anthology series in the 1960s and 70s, stands a poor second to the real horrors on television, and, in particular, the broadcasting of the Vietnam War.

Like Stephen King, Gregory A. Waller in his 1987 study of the American horror film argues that television can not succeed in producing Gothic/horrific drama; however, unlike King, Waller's argument centres on the medium's inferiority to film rather than its inability to surpass the real horrors presented on television. He suggests that it is television's aesthetic restraints which prevent this success: 'on most television sets, shadows and darkness become murky, textureless areas that lack the ominous blackness so often favoured by horror film directors' (1987b, 159). Whilst the historical specificity of Waller's analysis ought to be acknowledged, given that he is writing in an era before the full impact of television's future digital technologies had been felt, he directly counters Praver's suggestion that the aesthetic limitations of television's production and broadcast technologies prompted exciting and innovative

experimentation in the field of the horror film made for television, seeing television versions of the genre as poor cousins of the Gothic cinema.

Waller also suggests that as a domestic medium, television is too cosy and reassuring to successfully present the Gothic drama, and that television's flow of advertising, news, and so on, somehow negates the horror being shown in the tele-film. He states;

Having been to hell and back the viewer can also proceed with life as usual, staying tuned for the 11 o'clock news... Even more than the happy reconciliatory, restorative endings of virtually all the tele-films... the commercial breaks in made for television movies serve to dissipate - to deny- horror by predicting the future and insisting that the problems are solvable, and happiness, safety, health, security, and pleasure are attainable. (ibid., 159)

However, to some extent Waller counters his own argument by noting that a certain friction exists between the domestic subject matter of the tele-horror-film and the domestic viewing space. He notes that the programmes are 'focussed on the personal and the intimate, and are particularly given to narratives that feature an isolated victim... endangered young wife, or threatened middle-class family' (ibid., 145), going on to state that 'horror comes from outside the house and the family, infiltrating normality just as effortlessly and invisibly as the television programmes that appear in our living rooms' (ibid., 159). Therefore, to a certain extent, Waller contradicts himself, arguing that, on the one hand, television is incapable of producing the desired effects of the genre, but that, on the other hand, the made-for-television horror narrative emphasises a potential threat towards the very space in which it is being viewed. Furthermore, the repetitive nature of the broadcast text, and the fact that the

television which Waller discusses are likely to be shown within a season of such material, suggests that the restorative sense of closure which he isolates might, in fact, be a lot less final than he proposes. When each new week brings a new home-based horror, a sense of comfort or closure may be hard to find.

As well as exploring Gothic or terror/horror fictions on television, a number of critics have understood various non-fictional forms on television as Gothic. Elspeth Probyn, in her article 'Television's Unheimlich Home' (1993), and Mark Edmundson in an extended study of American Gothic culture, *Nightmare on Main Street: Angels, Sado-masochism and the Culture of Gothic* (1997), both briefly discuss the US audience-participation chat show, *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (Harpo Productions, US 1986-) as Gothic. Probyn, writing about women's viewing and the fear which is built up around representations of crime on television, discusses the juxtaposition of Oprah's probing into and reconstructions of rape, family crisis, and/or violence against women with more benign, everyday moments of daytime programming within television's broadcast flow. Contra to Waller's argument that advertising potentially dispels a sensation of fear or unease which may be associated with viewing the Gothic on television, Probyn suggests that this juxtaposition creates a feeling of uncanniness and makes the domestic viewing space 'unheimlich' in Freud's terms:

One of the most horrifying potential situations for women, rape, is articulated with mundane images of women and home - mad housewives in the supermarket, competition over hair colour, lovely young women conjuring up strange hunks to share their diet drinks - making the home unheimlich (uncanny). (1993, 271)

Mark Edmundson on the other hand states that *Oprah* (as well as the television news coverage of the OJ Simpson case, the Michael Jackson child abuse case, and

others) has been suffused with Gothic discourse (conventions, characters, plots) and focuses on the character conventions of the victim and villain.

Onto Oprah's stage troop numberless unfortunates, victims and villains.

The victims have been pursued, harassed, mistreated. They are sublimely innocent (as any reader of Gothic novels knows they have to be). The villains present a more interesting case. At first they come across as evil incarnate, or simply as monstrous creatures who have gone beyond evil and good. But eventually we learn that they themselves have been victims. They too are haunted by some past abuse, so that their bad behaviour takes on an air of inevitability. (1997, xiv)

As this description suggests then, according to Edmundson the Gothic on television is a melodramatic mode which may be appropriated by non-fictional programme makers, such as the *Oprah* scriptwriters and Oprah Winfrey herself, to characterise certain figures, to demonise the bad guy, and to valorise the victim.

This use of Gothic characterisation of real-life figures is also noted by Nicola Nixon in her essay 'Making Monsters, or Serialising Killers' (1998). Whilst Nixon is not exclusively discussing television news and documentary (she also examines autobiographical 'true-crime' literature and transcriptions of court proceedings), she does suggest that the rather boring, everyman-type serial killer is made more exciting, charismatic or terrifying by a semi-fictionalising or Gothicising process on television. She states that in order to turn the serial killer into the mythical folk-devil figure it has become in the latter part of the twentieth century, Gothic discourse has been applied to these figures, turning them into anti-heroes and locating 'the possibility of horror and madness beneath... beauty, charm or charisma... the potential for an uncanny, supernatural or monstrous transcendence of the ordinary' (ibid., 224). Nixon suggests

that society actually prefers, or even needs. the ‘Gothicised’ serial killer on television. and cannot cope with representations that lie closer to the truth of the banality. emptiness, and repetition of serial murder.

As more sustained discussions of the Gothic as a fictional mode or genre began to circulate in the 1990s, some of these studies of Gothic culture also turned their attention to television, albeit briefly. Fred Botting, in *Gothic* (1996), offers a history of Gothic literary and cinematic texts, as well as a history of the central paradigms of Gothic studies, and gives a general account of the ways in which the Gothic has shifted and mutated or ‘diffused’ (his term) across media. He sees the appearance of Gothic television as a product of postmodernity, citing both the parodic Gothic on television (particularly *The Addams Family* (Filmways Productions/American Broadcasting Company [ABC], 1964-66) and *The Munsters* (Kayro-Vue Productions/CBS 1964-66)), as well as *Twin Peaks*, as examples of the complex, postmodern Gothic text. As Botting writes of the latter, ‘Lynch’s television series... uses Gothic contrasts in a visual text whose network of allusions, quotations, stylistic parodies and pastiches was as broad as it was reflexive... [It has a] dense network of cultural and narrative allusion’ (ibid., 176).

Also focusing on the diffusion of the Gothic into the texts of late twentieth century culture, Christoph Grunenberg (1997), in a publication to accompany an exhibition entitled *Gothic* at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, Massachusetts, looks at an eclectic mix of texts/media in which the Gothic has become a significant mode of representation. These diverse media include visual/installation art, literature, film, computer games, the internet, music, fashion, style, advertising, ‘real life’, video art, photography, and, most importantly for this study, television. Grunenberg focuses particularly on Chris Carter’s *The X-Files* and *Millennium* as

employing a Gothic aesthetic on television, and describes the series as ‘mod-Gothic melodramas’ (ibid., 210). Again, in another recent eclectic cultural study of the Gothic, Richard Davenport Hines’ *Gothic: 400 Years of Excess, Horror, Evil and Ruin* (1998) has attempted to write a biography of the Gothic, tracing its progress through visual art, landscape gardening and architecture, literature, film, and ultimately television. The sheer size of this task is a problem for this study, as it is for Grunenberg’s text, in that it offers an overview of the locations of the Gothic during the last four hundred years and, as a result of the broad-reaching nature of this historical analysis, fails to offer a satisfactorily in-depth discussion of any of the areas in question. Davenport-Hines’ brief discussion of television primarily centres on the soap opera as a Gothic genre; he reads the North American soap operas *Melrose Place* (Darren Star Productions etc., US 1992-99) and *Sunset Beach* (Aaron Spelling Productions/NBC, US 1997-99) as Gothic in that they offer ‘no homeliness or reconciliation, only serial disruption’ (ibid., 10) within their narratives, and also notes the presence of explicitly Gothic characteristics (character types and narrative conventions) within these soap operas:

Sunset Beach even had a long-running storyline about a villainous “top” trapping a victimised “bottom” in traditional gothic subterranean confinement, and another about a generous millionaire called Ben haunted by an evil doppelgänger named Derek. (ibid.)

Furthermore, Davenport-Hines goes on to argue that within the British soap opera *Coronation Street* (Granada, 1960-), the storylines are inherently Gothic in that they are characterised by ‘confused paternities, improbable coincidences, melodrama, sudden death, cheap ideas, trivially stereotyped characters’ (ibid., 143). Ultimately, Davenport-Hines’ history of the Gothic is slightly disappointing as a history of Gothic

television in that he makes bold claims such as 'television - more than films. CD-ROM games or *Warhammer* role-playing - has been the most important medium of gothic infiltration' (ibid., 376), without giving any real attention to the programmes themselves, nor explaining fully why or how the Gothic appears on this medium. However, a more satisfying, if brief, account of Gothic television is offered by Lenora Ledwon in relation to the North American series, *Twin Peaks*.

Ledwon's article 'Twin Peaks and the Television Gothic' (1993) is one of the only articles to specifically address the nature of Gothic television in an extended and scholarly manner, and she does so in relation to David Lynch's *Twin Peaks*, which Ledwon sees as the first series to 'tap the full potential' of this particular genre on the domestic medium. The article's central focus is on medium specificity in Gothic representation, and the fact that television, according to Ledwon, is the ideal medium on which to present Gothic fictions: 'television would seem to be the ideal medium for Gothic inquiry. It is, after all, a mysterious box simultaneously inhabited by spirit images of ourselves and inhabiting our living rooms' (ibid., 260). Ledwon's notion of television's suitability to the Gothic thus rests on the importance of the domestic viewing space (as previously proposed by Praver (1980)), in relation to Freud's concept of 'uncanniness', in that the closeness of the familiar and unfamiliar, or, in Ledwon's terms, the domestic (viewing space) and the Gothic programme (viewing text), is intended to inspire in the viewer a feeling of fear, dread, or indeed, uncanniness. As she states,

Lynch transforms standard Gothic devices into television Gothic by domesticating them. He brings the horrid and the normal into juxtaposition until the viewer is unsure what is normal anymore... the

Television Gothic is the uncanny/unheimlich contained within the familiar/heimlich of the home. (1993, 263)

In this article, Ledwon also points out, as Freud does, that the unheimlich and heimlich are not two antithetical states but rather the uncanny is inseparable from the familiar. Therefore, Gothic television, as she sees it, is in the process of returning that which is familiar to and yet repressed within the domestic setting (e.g. incest, horror, taboo: the unmentionable elements of everyday life).

Whilst this analysis is innovatory in its focus on the Gothic television, and goes some way towards offering a definition of what the genre is, or might be, on television, it reads as an opening up of the key debates surrounding Gothic television, rather than a definitive analysis of the medium's version of the genre: its narrow focus on a single serial text (*Twin Peaks*) certainly calls for further work to be done in this area. Ledwon's argument problematically depends rather heavily on the metaphorical construction of television as an uncanny/ghostly medium in the home, rather than a complex product of various processes and institutional/industrial practices, in keeping with her rather literal handling of psychoanalytic theory (and, perhaps, an over-extension of the uncanny/un-homely metaphor). However, what this article does do is raise a number of integral questions about the nature of the Gothic text on television and the relationship between the texts and reception contexts of Gothic fiction on this medium.

As has been argued throughout this chapter, one of the focal topics for those studying Gothic fiction has been the process of definition, and the discovery or rediscovery of the texts that constitute the genre. Whilst this process has been relatively straightforward in relation to Gothic literature (given that, in the first place at least, there is an easily identifiable group of novels written around the 1790s which

can be grouped together as a Gothic literary movement), the latter part of this chapter will have shown that the process of identifying Gothic film and television has been rather more difficult, given that many scholars of the Gothic have identified a general diffusion of Gothic images and narratives across a wide range of cultural sites and forms in the twentieth century. Indeed, it is this lack of consensus surrounding the identification and definition of Gothic fiction within the study of television which, to a certain extent, prompts the interrogation of the genre on television in this thesis. However, to conclude this review of the critical approaches towards Gothic fiction in its various incarnations, it is possible to identify several central issues and paradigms which run across these fields of study, and which provide us with the key questions to ask of Gothic television.

Firstly, the issue of the relationship between the Gothic and domestic space has been closely analysed throughout the study of Gothic fictions. Whilst it is argued in this thesis that Gothic television provides a particular focus on images of home and family within the Gothic narrative in relation to television's domestic reception context, it has been shown throughout this chapter that an analysis of domestic space and the representation of homes and houses has been integral to Gothic studies in a broader sense. For example, Sigmund Freud's delineation of the uncanny's relation to the heimlich (the homely or familiar) (1990), Kate Ferguson-Ellis's exploration of the home-as-prison metaphor in the Gothic novel (1989), Fred Botting's observations on the domestication of the Gothic narrative in the nineteenth century (1996), and Mary Ann Doane's analysis of the Gothic house in the woman's film of the 1940s (1987a), all attest to the fact that both figurative and literal domestic spaces (whether a decrepit ancestral mansion or a family home which, on the surface at least, offers a semblance of quotidian domesticity) are of central importance to an understanding of the Gothic

genre in general. This observation does not call into question the validity of reading Gothic television as *particularly* interested in the domestic, however. Rather, it establishes a case for reading the Gothic as a genre steeped in images of domesticity, and prompts us to think in more detail about the impact of transposing this obsession with homes and families onto a inherently domestic medium. This central emphasis on the relationship between Gothic terror/horror and the domestic within Gothic culture as a whole is therefore a starting point for this thesis.

One of the other central paradigms of Gothic studies as outlined in this chapter has been a keen interest in the potentials for reader/viewer identification with the stock characters and events of Gothic fictions, and it is this work which has informed the enquiry into the structures of identification in place in the texts of Gothic television in this thesis. Feminist literary theory, particularly those branches of criticism motivated by psychoanalysis, opened up issues of identification between reader and heroine of the female Gothic novel, with particular emphasis on the structures of masochistic pleasure for the reader of such fictions (cf. Moers, 1978; Modleski, 1982a; Russ, 1993). In addition, both textual studies of women's Gothic cinema (Doane, 1987a) and empirical audience research into the female viewer of the Gothic horror film (Cherry, 2002) have provided important insights into the question of viewer-text identification within audio-visual renderings of the genre. Indeed, even the earliest critical reactions to the Gothic fictions, with their near-hysterical focus on the possibility of the reader of Gothic literature becoming morally corrupt at the end of the eighteenth century, deal, to some extent, with the issue of identification, given that they base their anxieties about the Gothic text on the prospect of the reader becoming over-involved with the reprehensible characters in narratives of villainy and victim-hood. Furthermore, the tentative work which has been done on the Gothic genre on

television has also begun to address the question of recognition between the viewer and the Gothic text (cf. Prawer, 1980; Waller, 1987b; Probyn, 1993), calling for further work to be done on the ways in which this identification is written into the programmes in question (an examination which, it is hoped, this thesis will provide).

Finally, in relation to critical analyses of audio-visual Gothic fictions, the issue of medium specificity, or how the genre is adapted to the media on which it is presented, has become a focal point of discussion. This question not only addresses, in the case of Gothic television, the acknowledgement of its domestic reception context, but also relates to the ways in which, for example, filmic versions of the Gothic negotiate the visualisation of the central tropes/aesthetic of the literary Gothic (cf. Huss, 1972a; Doane, 1987a). The issue of medium specificity is also addressed by those analyses which seek to outline the relationship between innovation in moving image technologies and the Gothic genre, from the magic lantern (Mannoni, 2000; Gunning, 2001; Castle, 1995) to broadcast television (Prawer, 1980), arguing that the supernatural fictions of the Gothic genre enable or promote formal experimentation, allowing for the 'showcasing' of new media technologies. It is these issues, related to the notion of medium specificity, that this thesis will now address, as the following chapter delineates the ways in which early Gothic anthology series on British television both negotiated the difficulties of adapting Gothic literature for the medium, and flaunted the technological possibilities of television drama production in the 1960s and 70s.

The Heritages of Gothic Television and the British Gothic Anthology Series

The history of television drama in Britain has been told as a decline in the single teleplay (a progressive, culturally valued, but time and budget consuming television genre (cf. Gardner and Wyver, 1983; Caughie, 2000)), and as the ascension of the serial drama, a denigrated form which nonetheless has been characterised as responding to the unique ontological status of television (cf. Creeber, 2001b).

However, sitting somewhere between these two poles is the generic anthology drama, single-teleplays grouped under a particular generic heading, which were popular with both audiences and producers in the formative years of British television. The anthology format on British television in the 1960s and 70s acted as a kind of ‘halfway house’ between the respectable but expensive single play, and the popular but predictable serial drama. Writing about this format in his history of ITV programming, Jeremy Potter acknowledges the following:

For drama departments anthologies of this kind had several advantages...

[They] were likely to have wider audience appeal because the viewer could feel confidence in “what the play was about”... IBA [Independent Broadcasting Association] research in 1975 confirmed that plays presented within anthologies gained not only larger audiences but also greater appreciation than single plays on their own. For producers there was the advantage of being able to commission scripts from a circle of predictably professional contributors able to embroider and develop a given theme with originality. To schedulers came the convenience of a block of programmes of similar length and similar audience appeal.

(1990, 222)

Thus genres as diverse as the romance, the detective story, and the heritage drama were broadcast under anthology series ‘umbrella’ titles, responding to a need to produce economically viable television drama which would attract the same core audience week after week.

Such a response was seen in the development of the Gothic anthology series in the 1960s and 70s, which fulfilled a dual remit both for popular, entertaining television which would, it was hoped, attract a dedicated audience, and for respectable, culturally valued television drama, often adapted from the Gothic ‘classics’ (M.R. James, Le Fanu, Mary Shelley, Stoker, etc.) which would appeal to television’s regulators as well as its viewers. This examination of the Gothic anthology series charts the changes and developments in this particular generic anthology format, from early experimentation in the 1940s and 50s, to a relative proliferation in the following two decades, when a plethora of Gothic drama was produced under such umbrella titles as *Tales of Mystery*, *Mystery and Imagination*, *Late Night Horror*, and *Ghost Story for Christmas*, to the genre’s disappearance in the 1980s and its brief revival in the 1990s.

In addition to the provision of a history of the Gothic anthology series on British television, this chapter also offers an insight into the ways in which these programmes worked through the difficulties of presenting Gothic or supernatural fiction on television. These programmes (and, more precisely, those who made them) demonstrated a consciousness of their domestic reception context, an awareness perhaps heightened by the fact that the Gothic as a genre is so preoccupied with the domestic locale. The ways in which anthology series of the 1960s and 70s negotiated the possibilities and limitations of television production and reception in creating satisfactorily ‘effective’ Gothic dramas are addressed in detail in this chapter which charts the shift between two distinct modes of Gothic representation: the suggestive,

restrained ambiguity of the supernatural ghost story, reliant on hints and traces of the supernatural, and, on the other hand, the excessive, spectacular, effects-laden supernatural Gothic drama, with far more in common with the theatrical and cinematic adaptations of the Gothic narrative.

The evolution of these two distinct modes of Gothic representation on television is comparable to the ways in which the genre has developed in both its literary and filmic forms. Discussing the tradition of British Gothic fiction, David Pirie characterises this distinction in the following terms:

In certain kinds of horror – especially the Victorian ghost story... to reveal your hand is to destroy a carefully wrought effect.. . But there is another equally respectable Gothic line... including M.G. Lewis, Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker and all Grand Guignol theatre which precisely depends upon the clear visual portrayal of every stage of action. (1973, 41)

In the context of British cinematic versions of the Gothic, we might see these two opposing poles of Gothic fiction as represented by, on the one hand, Jack Clayton's *The Innocents* (UK, 1961) or most of Jacques Tourneur's *Night of the Demon* (UK, 1957) (without the added 'demon' insisted on by the film's producers), and, on the other hand, the prolific output of the Hammer and Amicus studios¹. British television of the 1960s and 70s will therefore be used as a case study for the exploration of these two distinct versions of the Gothic. Consequently, the multiple heritages of Gothic television will be addressed in this chapter, challenging the assumption that a discussion of adapted television drama must look narrowly back to the original literary source only. It will be argued that Gothic anthology dramas of the 1960s and 70s

borrowed from a range of literary, radiographic, theatrical and cinematic styles, a fact which also contests the rather misguided assumption that nascent television drama was singularly theatrical in origin. Jason Jacobs, in his extensive analysis of the development of the medium's dramatic forms, has successfully redressed the notion that all early television drama was simply 'static, boring, theatrical' (2000, 3), arguing that,

[t]he development of television drama is not a story of the steady emancipation from theatrical values toward the cinematic, but one where producers were able to choose from a range of stylistic features, some of them associated with theatre, some with film styles, and some with the narrative forms of literature. (ibid., 117)

It is this notion of choice, this sense of textual borrowing from a range of other media, which is integral to an understanding of the ways in which the Gothic drama developed on British television in the 1960s and 70s.

Suggestion and restraint: the television ghost story

During the fourth year of post-war production, in March 1950, the issue of broadcasting Gothic teleplays became a contentious one for the BBC. Whilst the Gothic anthology drama was not yet in production, single plays such as those produced by Douglas Allen under the title of *The Edgar Allen Poe Centenary* in October 1949², began to cause concern. Prompted by an unprecedented number of

¹ This distinction, between Clayton's film and the films of the Hammer studios, is outlined by Andrew Higson (1991).

² 'The Cask of Amontillado', 'Some Words with a Mummy', and 'Fall of the House of Usher' were all shown between 9.30p.m. and 10.15p.m. on the 6th of October, 1949, adapted by Joan Maude and Michael Warre, and could therefore also be seen as an early form of anthology drama.

complaints about the unsuitable nature of television drama³. D. Singer, the Clerk to the Board of the BBC, sent a memo to the Director of Home Broadcasting (Basil Nicholls) which questioned the propriety of this kind of drama:

What I am trying to establish is whether the BBC - assuming it be a force in the land - ought to do what it can to rehabilitate this country... without being propagandist, I think we should always bear in mind that we, as a nation, are very sick.. Seen in this light, a string of our horror plays seem to me to be escapism at its worst - hugging the knife that stabs you sort of thing. (Singer, 1950)

This need to 'rehabilitate' the country refers to the fact that Singer and the Board believed that Britain as a nation had been exposed to too many real images of death and horror during the Second World War, and therefore ought not to be exposed to any fictional horrors as entertainment on television, a sentiment very much in keeping with the Reithian conception of the corporation as a benevolent form of public nannyng. Indeed, this attitude towards the post-war broadcasting of Gothic/horror drama is both similar and in direct contrast to those arguments surrounding the transmission of the same kind of material over twenty years later in the United States, after the Vietnam War (a conflict which has become known as 'the first television war'). These objections are exemplified by the horror writer Stephen King (1981, 212-213), who proposes that dramatic horror would no longer have any effect on American television viewers who had been exposed, through the medium of television, to the real horrors of Vietnam, and that death and abomination had themselves become as commonplace and everyday as forms of television entertainment (a full delineation of this argument is given in the previous chapter of this thesis). However, in Britain in the 1940s and

³ Files at the BBC Written Archive centre (R73/136/1) suggest an organised letter writing campaign.

50s, the desire, as represented by Singer's memo, was clearly to protect the viewer from further exposure to the horrors of war, rather than to protect them from the ennui of over-exposure.

The following month, in April 1950, Val Gielgud, head of the BBC's drama department responded to these criticisms in a memo entitled 'Reflections upon the present state of Television Drama', which took to task those members of the viewing public who had criticised the corporation's dramatic output.

Observe, for example, the recent explosion anent morbidity-and-horror in television plays: we were, I am sure, all perfectly aware of the situation, of its causes, and of the need to make changes, before we received the unsolicited assistance of... the famous 187 correspondents from the Neighbourhood of Sutton Coldfield. This sort of outcry will always occur from time to time in the earlier stages of the establishment of a service... It unfortunately appears to be a fact that the majority of new purchasers of television sets seem to have remarkably low dramatic tastes - which may be largely due to the fact that many of them have had little or no experience of the living theatre. (Gielgud, 1950)

This correspondence, whilst acknowledging a need to address the suitability of the horror genre for television, clearly demarcates a certain attitude towards new television viewers in the regions as lacking in sufficient cultural capital to 'deal with' this kind of programming. The first provincial television transmitter, which had been installed in Sutton Coldfield in the autumn of the previous year, bringing the BBC to viewers in the Midlands for the first time, clearly also brought new problems relating to a more culturally diverse audience in the eyes of the London-based BBC. More

producing 187 complainants in the Sutton Coldfield area of the West Midlands alone.

importantly however, this memo highlights the key point of contention that ran throughout the debate: that the Gothic was an unsuitable genre for domestic transmission. According to Gielgud, the horror and morbidity of the Gothic was seen as acceptable within a public reception context, with the distancing effect of separation between audience and action inherent in the theatrical space, reinforced by the ‘detached’ attitude of the culturally informed theatre-goer. However, when performed within the bounds of private, domestic space, to a supposedly undiscerning ‘mass audience’, the same genres (horror, the supernatural, the Gothic, etc.) became far more problematic for the BBC. Relating back to Singer’s remarks about the avoidance of bringing horror back into the nation’s homes, Gielgud’s rather superior attitude towards the new and decidedly ‘un-metropolitan’ viewers of Sutton Coldfield betrays the BBC’s concerns regarding television’s uneasy place within the provincial home. Several days later, in a ‘Note on Drama Policy’ written by the Director of Home Broadcasting, the problem of adapting moments of horror in ‘classic’ literature (specifically the gouging of Gloucester’s eyes in Shakespeare’s *King Lear*) for both radio and television was also addressed:

It is not possible to lay down a detailed policy in the matter of horrific or sordid plays or plays dealing with unpleasant subjects. Such a policy would have to be framed in the most general terms - terms that would admit the blinding of Gloucester in *King Lear* while excluding some possibly lesser horror in some worthless play. Each play must be considered individually in terms of good taste and values. The above remarks apply in the first instance to sound broadcasting, but the basic policy of ultimate good taste must apply to television as well, although obviously the gouging out of Gloucester’s eyes before a camera, however

discretely treated, raises a different class of problem to the broadcasting of the words, “Out, vile jelly”. (Nicholls, 1950)

This ‘basic policy of ultimate good taste’, implying an aesthetic of suggestive restraint rather than impropriety display within the adaptation of ‘classic’ literature, was subsequently what shaped the BBC’s attitude to Gothic drama for some time to come. Nicholls’ discussion of the different problems of adapting for television and radio is also illuminating, in that it exposes one of the early aesthetic heritages of Gothic anthology drama. The following analysis will therefore outline the ways in which such ‘horror’ series looked back to its radiophonic ancestry in negotiating these issues of ‘ultimate good taste’.

The Gothic anthology drama in British broadcasting did not begin on television but in a popular, long running radio show. Fronted by Valentine Dyall, also known as ‘The Man in Black’, ten seasons of Gothic plays under the umbrella title *Appointment with Fear* were broadcast on the Home Service between 1943 and 1944 and on the Light Programme between 1945 and 1955⁴, produced by Val Gielgud and Martyn C. Webster. Dyall, who was best known for his sonorous, spine-chilling voice, acted as the host for the show, introducing the story (often the written-for-radio work of the American writer John Dickson-Carr, but also the adapted work of Poe, Stevenson, and others), commenting on the narrative afterwards, and sometimes becoming absorbed into the action himself. Peter Haining has stated that the series moved to BBC television for a short run beginning in December 1949 (although no evidence can be found in listings guides or BBC files to support this fact), claiming that the series was produced by Michael Carreras (later associated with Hammer studios), and featured stories such as ‘The Ghost of Rashmon Hall’, ‘The Man With a Cloak’, and a John

Dickson-Carr story entitled 'Vampire Tower', which had been read by Dyall on BBC radio six years earlier (1993). Haining reports that although Dyall acted as a narrator in this series, he more often than not became involved in the 'weird and uncanny events that ensued' (ibid., 6). Whilst, as intimated above, this description cannot be verified, the move of a popular radio show to television would not be uncommon. Indeed, a similar move was made in the United States when the first Gothic anthology drama series, *Suspense* (CBS, 1949-64), made the transition from popular radio show to television anthology series. As with *Appointment with Fear*, *Suspense* also featured the adaptation of classic supernatural literature (Edgar Allen Poe, H.P. Lovecraft) and the work of Dickson-Carr, and was particularly noted for its outstanding casts, some of whom (Boris Karloff, Peter Lorre, etc.) were already associated with the genre and a Gothic style of performance.

Shortly after *Suspense* was produced in the United States, NBC introduced their own version of the Gothic-horror anthology series, *Lights Out* (1949-52), which again was adapted from a successful radio series which began in 1934 and four well-received television 'specials' of the same name which had been produced by Fred Coe three years beforehand. As with Dyall in the BBC's *Appointment with Fear*, this series was presented by a host, Jack La Rue, and featured both adapted literary ghostly classics and some specially commissioned ghost stories. The makers of *Lights Out* enriched the presentation of the Gothic narrative in the early days of television with a particular aptitude for using sound to enhance the eerie mood of the drama (an aptitude which may have come, in part, from the series' radio ancestry):

Each episode began with a close-up of a pair of eyes, followed by a
bloody hand reaching out to turn off the lights. An eerie laugh would

⁴ Dyall also starred in his own radio series entitled *The Man in Black*, broadcast on the Light

follow and a sonorous voice intoned, "Lights out, everybody..." Tales about haunted houses, the dead returning, and ghastly encounters on lonely country roads were familiar themes ... [and] the transmissions were also enhanced by the special eerie musical effects of Arlo Hults on an organ and Doris Johnson on a harp. (Haining 1993, 50)

This description defines the ways in which the anthology series sought to terrify viewers through the deployment of low budget sound effects and minimal orchestration which both betrayed a radiophonic background and which would also become specific to the television genre (the sepulchral tonal quality of the narrator's voice, the combination of resonant musical instruments to create eerie sound effects, etc.). However, the science-fiction anthology series would soon be set to surpass its Gothic counterpart in popularity in the United States in the nineteen fifties, even though the Gothic literary adaptation would still appear from time to time within the bounds of the science-fiction anthology series (as in ABC TV's *Tales of Tomorrow* (US, 1951-53) series, where Lon Chaney Jr. appeared in the title role of the 1952 episode 'Frankenstein'). As with British television in the same decade, US television schedules in the 1950s saw a distinct lack of the Gothic anthology series, perhaps reflecting the uneasiness towards the genre felt during the post-war decade (an attitude exemplified by the BBC correspondence discussed above). In fact, in Britain, it was not until the introduction of commercial television that the Gothic anthology series was reconsidered as a viable form of television entertainment.

From September 1955 onwards, both the BBC's and ITV's strategies for competition took the production of television drama as being the indicator of

popularity and quality, and the anthology format became an integral part of this competition for viewers and cultural kudos. As Andrew Crisell states,

In drama the BBC [and head of drama, Michael Barry] persisted long after the arrival of ITV with a policy which one might expect of a public service broadcaster: it tried to be as eclectic as possible, offering classic plays, adaptations of great novels, original series and serials, and single plays by modern authors... Commendable as the BBC's drama policy was, it perforce became more sharply focussed when in the late 1950s ABC introduced a Sunday night series shrewdly entitled *Armchair Theatre*. (1997, 95)

Armchair Theatre (ABC 1956-69; Thames 1970-74) became one of the most popular and long running drama anthology series of the 1950s⁵, which took both original and adapted material and produced plays for television. This series, not bound to a particular genre but to the remit for innovative, challenging television drama, 'showcased' the very best in television writing and production, and saw the television play on ITV developing a reputation for quality, as drama on BBC had done in the preceding years. On the strength of *Armchair Theatre*, ABC Television, the company which provided weekday programming for the Midlands and weekend output for the North, became celebrated as producers of groundbreaking drama, particularly after 1958 under series producer Sydney Newman, who had arrived at ABC from Canada with the desire to revolutionise television drama and produce teleplays which were more closely suited to the experiences and tastes of a mass audience⁶; ABC's anthology drama series subsequently enjoyed a considerable popularity and success in

⁵ 'Between the autumn of 1959 and the summer of 1960 *Armchair Theatre* plays were in the top ten programmes for thirty-two weeks out of thirty-seven' (Sendall 1982, 346)

the 1950s and 60s. In addition to the fact that the making of weekly teleplays suited the production structures of the television industry (they were relatively cheap and quick to make, using small, self-contained production teams), these thirty to one hundred and twenty minute plays offered the opportunity for experimentation with the possibilities (and limitations) of television drama. Without the pressure of producing a serial drama which needed to maintain audience interest over a number of weeks, the producers, directors, writers and designers of ABC's anthologised teleplays were at more liberty to innovate, both in terms of challenging the received aesthetics of television drama, and indeed, in the kinds of plays produced for the series. It is therefore no surprise that in the franchise award competitions of the 1960s, anthology drama became ABC's selling point; in April 1967 a document produced to accompany ABC Television's application for appointment as a programme contractor for the ITV network stated that 'ABC Television has always seen anthology drama as an opportunity for stretching the minds and feelings of peak viewing audiences beyond the narrow confines of variety acts and storytelling'.⁷

As *Armchair Theatre* continued the producers decided that the series would benefit from 'specialising', from focusing on a particular genre within a season of plays. Thus in the summer of 1960, overlapping with the forth season of *Armchair Theatre* plays, *Armchair Mystery Theatre* (ABC, 1960-65) began its first season. This branch of the series set out to produce plays based in the established genres of the psychological thriller, the mystery, and the tragedy, and led the way for later generically identified anthology series. However, there were still few examples of the

⁶ Indeed, the BBC 'poached' Sydney Newman from ABC and established him as its Head of Drama in 1962, the BBC's first appointment of a senior figure from ITV and a clear indication of the extent to which the corporation saw the drama anthologies of ABC/ITV as a threat to their ratings.

⁷ ABC's application in the 1967 franchise awards was not entirely successful. A reorganisation of the London contractors, and the formation of London Weekend Television [LWT], meant that ABC was forced into a merger with Rediffusion, the latter being the junior partner, to form Thames Television.

Gothic anthology series on British television during the nineteen fifties, with ABC television also producing the only notable exception to this: *Hour of Mystery*, which was broadcast in the summer of 1957, a year after the start of *Armchair Theatre*. *Hour of Mystery* was a thirteen-week series produced by John Nelson Burton, in which episodes were linked by Donald Wolfitt playing a narrator in the guise of a connoisseur and collector of crime objects. Whilst little is known of this series (due to the significant gaps in the archiving of material pertaining to the early output of independent television), *Hour of Mystery* featured adaptations of classic Gothic stories such as Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Bottle Imp*, and utilised the Gothic tale to encroach on the BBC's dramatic territory and their desire to produce 'quality' literary adaptations in order to distinguish themselves from their competitors. Indeed, an article by Howard Thomas (then Managing Director of ABC) in *The Television Annual for 1958*, reports on the fact that *Hour of Mystery* was an integral part of the company's competition with the BBC:

So the battle goes on. With their sheets of daily programmes marked out hour by hour... ABC and ATV throw in *The 64,000 Question* and *Hour of Mystery* against the BBC's Saturday-night comedy hour... All this is for you, bringing you a choice, and offering more carefully planned programmes than when television was a monopoly. And your tastes are ever changing. Today's favourite is tomorrow's bore. Where is the exact point at which a popular programme begins to pall? The programme planners' job is to anticipate your change of taste months before you do, and then take the programme off the air before you will not want it.

(1957. 35)

Thomas's claims support the notion that the Gothic anthology drama was beginning to be viewed as a viable weapon in the duopolistic war for ratings, a fact that is also acknowledged in a letter from Cecil Madden (Head of Programmes, BBC) to Michael Barry (Head of Drama), written after a Television Programme Planning Committee Meeting in 1959, in which Madden discusses the suggestion that the BBC introduce the generic season:

I made a suggestion that if we are to compete in this way with feature films [on ITV], however old, the best method to adopt is possibly to make the plays conform to certain overall popular titles which will attract the viewer in themselves, such as, at random, "Mystery Playhouse"... there is no doubt that "Mystery Playhouse", "Armchair Theatre" ... do have a word of mouth and paper appeal. (Madden, 1959)

The BBC's hypothetical 'Mystery Playhouse' clearly shows an awareness, on the part of the corporation's executives at least, of the possibilities and attractions of generic specialisation in the drama anthology series, perhaps in direct reference to *Hour of Mystery* and pre-empting ABC's *Armchair Mystery Theatre* season in the following year.

Whilst the BBC continued to eschew the Gothic anthology series in the early 1960s, independent television in Britain continued to experiment with the format. London contractor Associated-Rediffusion produced the series *Tales of Mystery* between March 1961 and 1963, which featured twenty-nine episodes of the adapted stories of Algernon Blackwood.⁸ The series was hosted by a sombre John Laurie and met with mixed reviews in the popular press. Whilst some felt the programme

⁸ Blackwood, who had died a decade earlier, was immensely popular with both radio listeners and early television viewers on the BBC, where he read his own stories direct to camera under the titles *A Ghost Story* (1947) and *Saturday Night Stories* (1948-49). He was voted television personality of the year by the Television Society in 1947.

developed well on Blackwood's ghoulish storytelling from earlier years of broadcasting⁹, others, such as Denis Thomas in the *Daily Mail* suggested that.

'Television being a strictly literal medium... can add nothing to a cosy tale of death and diabolism without overdoing it. One way to cope with this difficulty is to show less and suggest more' (quoted in Haining 1993, 189). This kind of criticism, displaying a resistance to the representation of the supernatural on television, clearly rested on a certain nostalgia for the ghost story as told on radio, by Blackwood, Dyal, and others, a medium which quite obviously 'showed less and suggested more' than television. The challenge for the directors, writers, and producers of Gothic anthology drama was therefore established as a need to create atmosphere, to audio-visually evoke the supernatural in mood and feeling rather than clearly visualise the genre's associated ghosts and monsters, and to develop a restrained, suggestive aesthetic which remained much closer to radio versions of the Gothic than to its cinematic and theatrical ancestors. To a certain extent, the producers of ABC's long-running Gothic anthology series, *Mystery and Imagination*, took up this challenge.

Mystery and Imagination ran in five seasons from January 1966 until February 1970, and was produced by Jonathan Alwyn for ABC Television (1966-68) and then Reginald Collin for Thames Television (1968-70). Based entirely on the adaptation of classic Gothic novels, short stories, and plays, it most successfully marks what S. S. Prawer, in his extensive analysis of the cinematic 'Terror film', describes as the 'evolution' of television's own variations of the Terror film for the small screen (1980, 20). *Mystery and Imagination* was produced within an innovative time in the history of television, sometimes referred to as the 'Golden Age' of television drama (cf. Caughie, 2000), and saw the Gothic drama on television being used to 'showcase'

⁹ Maurice Wiggins in the *Sunday Times* for one (see Haining 1993, 189).

both new production technologies and the talents of the ABC personnel. Furthermore, and most interestingly for this analysis of the Gothic anthology series, *Mystery and Imagination* shifted between two distinct modes of Gothic representation throughout its five season run: the suggestive, restrained ambiguity of the supernatural ghost story and the excessive, spectacular supernatural horror drama.

Production of *Mystery and Imagination* can, in part, be understood as a reaction to the criticisms levelled at Independent Television in the early to mid sixties. When the Pilkington Report into television broadcasting was published in June 1962, the BBC was vindicated and ITV blamed. Pilkington retained its pristine objections to commercial television, judging it by Reithian standards and refusing to allow it any of its own... Claiming that the public service aims enshrined in the 1954 Television Act had never been fulfilled, the report proposed that ITV should start all over again. (Crisell 1997, 111)

ITV was thus forced to re-examine its attitude towards 'quality programming' and 'public service' in relation to the broadcasting output offered by the BBC, and the contractors, particularly ABC, 'renewed their efforts at high quality drama' (ibid.). *Mystery and Imagination* was part of this response in that it was an attempt to produce a Gothic anthology series which was both 'quality' and 'popular' (in the Reithian sense of the words), using teams whose reputations had been established in other television drama, notably *Armchair Theatre*. Prestigious television writers such as Robert Muller and George F. Kerr, directors such as Patrick Dromgoole and Joan Kemp-Walsh, and a host of classically trained actors (Denholm Elliott, Freddie Jones, Joss Ackland), all contributed regularly to the series, as did a variety of well-respected production personnel.

In a *TV Times* interview given to coincide with the start of the series in 1966, *Mystery and Imagination*'s story editor, Terence Feely, commented on the medium's suitability for Gothic adaptations, and drew a parallel between domestic 'parlour' storytelling at the end of the previous century, and the activity of watching television in the 1960s.

The Victorians were willing victims of the pleasurable shudder that makes the lamp light mellow, the fire warmer. These stories were written, in my view, as a protest against the increasing dominance of the machine... Yet, ironically, it is the machine - in the shape of television - which has restored these tales their original magic and power. They were written to be read aloud in the security of the family circle. In re-establishing the family audience, television has enabled us to re-create almost exactly the conditions in which their long gone authors intended these stories to be heard and to have their effect. (Feely 1966, 4)

This clearly outlines the intention of this series: to use television to *return* to the domestic consumption of Gothic stories and tales, those narratives which sought to chill or disturb their readers (or, in this case, viewers) within the family group.

Implicitly, the act of television viewing was being given a sense of cultural kudos here when compared to the reading of literary fiction, and in the interview with Feely, as with the framing of the series elsewhere in the *TV Times*, the programme's 'literariness' was emphasised, as if to authenticate it and assign to *Mystery and Imagination* a degree of prestige:

To prepare the... series, the producer, Jonathan Alwyn and I had to read through more than 400 Victorian tales of the bizarre and the supernatural looking for suitable ones to dramatise... We read so many stories to be

sure we used the best and to soak ourselves in the Victorian writers' craftsmanship. (ibid.)

These comparisons, between the reading and viewing of Gothic fictions in the home, and the writing and televising of Gothic fictions for a domestic audience, speak much of the medium's anxiety about its own status in the mid 1960s, and, in particular, about ITV's own position within television's institutional structures. By drawing on these comparisons, the producers of *Mystery and Imagination* could fend off the criticisms of regulatory bodies and the press alike, by insisting on a very particular ancestry for their series, and by seeking to transpose the Gothic from the literary to the television text. It is important to note however that the Gothic as a literary genre had had its own history of treading the fine line between popular sensationalism and the literary highbrow (as discussed in the previous chapter); as such, it might be seen as an appropriate choice of genre with which to satisfy both the viewing public and ITV's critics.

Feely's comments, that *Mystery and Imagination* marked a *return* to domestic Gothic storytelling, are also reflected in a certain awareness of the viewing context present in the particular stories chosen for adaptation, which more often than not centred around a haunted house or some kind of family trauma (at least sixteen out of twenty-three episodes). The importance of the domestic location was reiterated by the 'taglines' accompanying particular episodes, often a piece of dialogue taken from the week's teleplay and published at the bottom of their *TV Times* listing. Playing upon the idea that houses formed the cathexis of fear and unease in *Mystery and Imagination*, typical taglines were: 'Fear haunts this house – it lurks beyond the candle flame – it whispers down the corridors. Fear of living, fear of dying – Fear, Fear, Fear' ('Fall of the House of Usher'); 'Please hurry home father – mother and I are

frightened out of our senses' ('The Open Door'): 'I have seen things in this house with my own eyes that would make your hair stand on end' ('The Canterville Ghost'); or 'The house is silent now... and in the silence someone is listening' ('The Listener'). The programme's producers, and those responsible for its marketing, clearly wished to draw parallels between the Gothic text on television and its space of consumption, the home, perhaps to increase the potential of their teleplays to have an effect on the viewer.

It is also telling that each episode of the first three seasons of *Mystery and Imagination* was framed by the presence of a story-teller, Richard Beckett (played by David Buck) in the guise of a Victorian romantic, who not only introduced the episode, but on several occasions became part of the drama itself; for example, in 'The Fall of the House of Usher', Beckett took on the role of the nameless narrator in Poe's story, an old school friend of Roderick Usher's, and became very much involved in the narrative events, falling in love with Madeleine Usher and narrowly escaping death at the final spectacular collapse of the rotting house. This level of narrative interpolation by an 'involved' narrator is a classic device of the Gothic novel, and was also deployed in the ghost story as presented on radio (see the discussion of *Appointment with Fear* above). Beckett/Buck acted as an intermediary between story and audience, drawing the viewer into the diegesis and therefore bridging the gap between the uncanny/Gothic drama and the homely setting in which these dramas were viewed. The presence of the storyteller was an established device in other Gothic or mystery television anthology series of the time (for example, Donald Pleasance introducing *Armchair Mystery Theatre*, or John Laurie doing the same for *Tales of Mystery*), but

Mystery and Imagination was the only British series in which, on occasion, the story teller became fully integrated into the action of the narrative¹⁰.

In order to explore the first of the two previously outlined trajectories of the Gothic drama on television (the suggestive, restrained ghost story), and the debt which the Gothic anthology series owed to its radio predecessors, it is necessary to look at a single episode of *Mystery and Imagination* in more detail. The fourth episode of the first season, an adaptation of Margaret Oliphant's 'The Open Door', provides the case in point. In a discussion of an episode which clearly sought to respond to criticisms levelled at the presentation of the Gothic on television, the following analysis will explore the ways in which a television adaptation of a ghost story might begin to look and *sound* like a 'radio play with pictures'. It would be problematic to argue that 'The Open Door' was somehow backward or primitive in its relationship to radiophonic forms of the Gothic ghost story; rather, the complex sound design will be discussed as a creative response to the criticisms levelled at television's ability to 'tell a good ghost story', as well as a negotiation of the limitations of television production during the 1960s.

'The Open Door', adapted by George F. Kerr and directed by Joan Kemp-Walsh, is a ghost story based in the grounds of a Scottish country house (owned by Colonel Mortimer (Jack Hawkins)) in the late nineteenth century, and centred around the haunting of a ruined house in its grounds. The haunting is first noticed by Colonel Mortimer's son, Roland (Henry Beltran), and then, when the Colonel returns from a trip to London after hearing of his son's 'disturbance', the Colonel himself investigates the sound of the haunting (a child sobbing), firstly with an army companion (Derek Tansley), then with the sceptical local doctor (Mark Dignam), and

¹⁰ N.B. This character device had, however, been used in *Thriller* (Hubbell Robinson

finally with a priest (John Laurie) who recognises the ghost as Willy, a local lad killed during service as a drummer boy in India, and who lays his ghost to rest. The episode is introduced by Richard Beckett, who, speaking directly to the viewer, claims that the Colonel was a friend of his father's, thus offering the aforementioned link between the real and fictional worlds.

The action in 'The Open Door' fluctuates between the Mortimer's house (where the family gather around Roland's bedside) and the haunted ruins; both locations are clearly constructed in a studio and therefore shot (on video) from a limited number of perspectives. However, the ruins setting appears all the more hollow and artificial because it is meant to be a rugged outdoor location; in actual fact, this 'wildness' is far more successfully represented through the layering of 'wild' sound effects (whistling wind, howling dogs, owls and birds, etc.) than in the rather flat and insubstantial-looking set (see fig. 1.1). This 'wild sound' is used continuously during the episode, even when the action shifts back to the house, to create an atmosphere of dread/foreboding (e.g. the wind is heard constantly until the ghost is laid to rest).

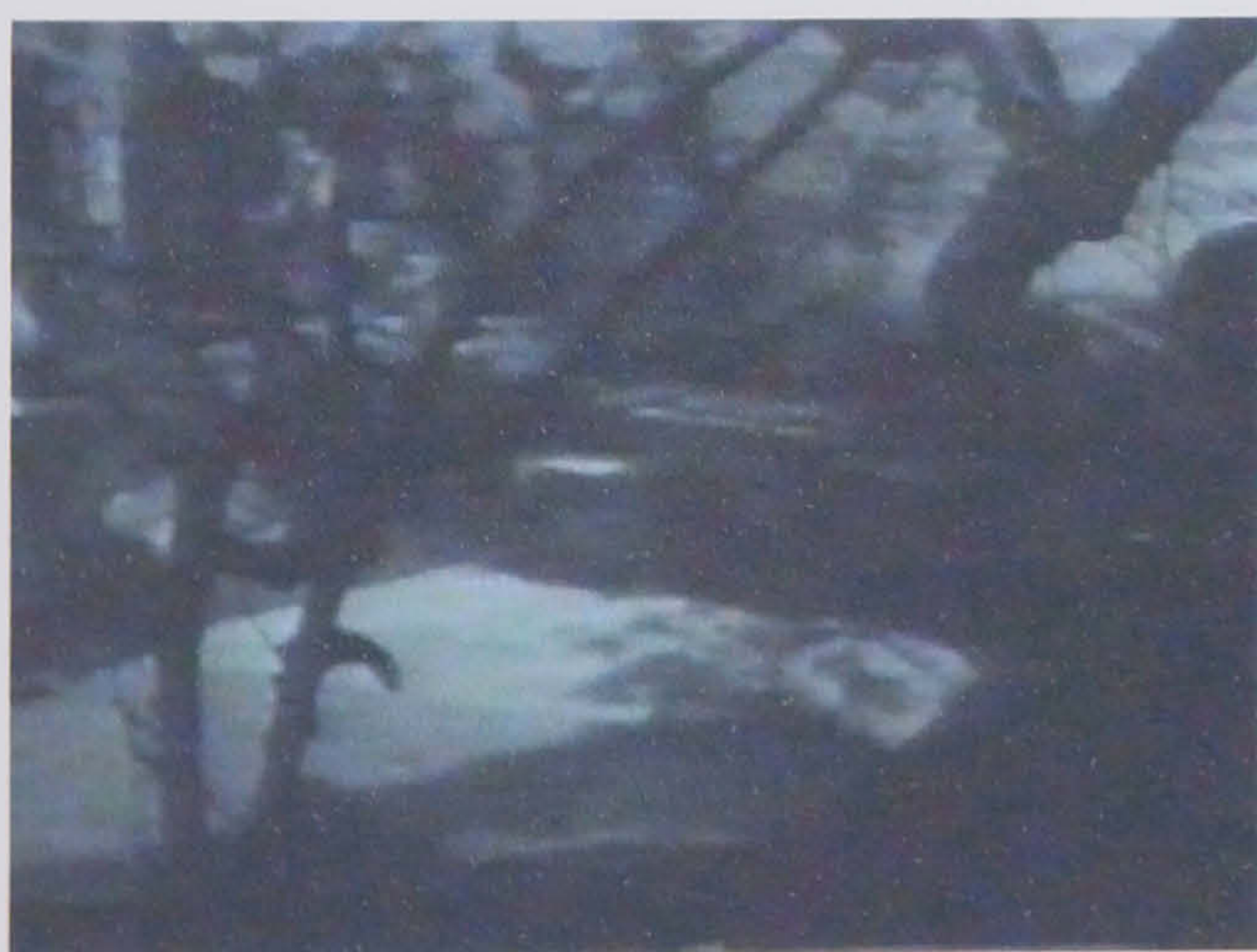


Fig. 1.1: Insubstantial setting

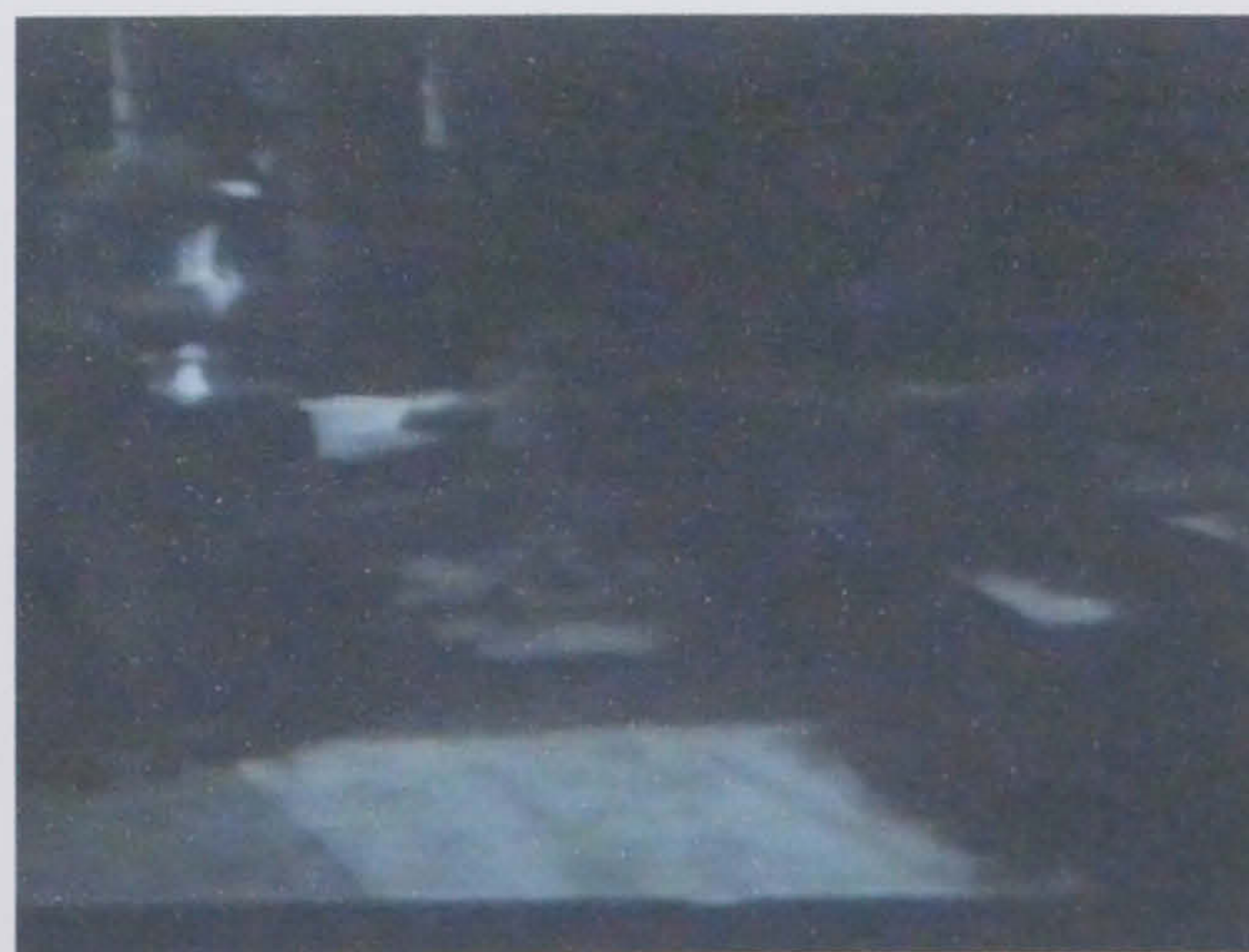


Fig. 1.2: Empty shot of the ruins

Throughout the episode, Colonel Mortimer repeatedly returns to the ruins to seek out the source of the crying voice which has been haunting his son. and these are the moments which can be most accurately described as utilising the techniques of the radio play to suggest, rather than reveal, the presence of the supernatural. For example, in the first of these sequences, when Mortimer explores the ruins with his friend, Corporal Jones, the scene opens on a medium shot of Jones looking around to the sound of wind whistling, a dog howling, and the hoot of an owl, and continues with a series of similar medium close-ups and close-ups of the two men reacting to a number of diegetic but visually un-located sounds. As the scene progresses, other supernatural sounds are heard (an amplified heartbeat, unearthly sobbing and groaning, an ethereal echoing voice which repeats the Colonel's calls of 'Who is there?'), as the men are shot from a variety of positions and distances looking around for the source of the sound, reacting to the cacophony of sounds around them. In doing so, Colonel Mortimer and Corporal Jones take on the role of diegetic audience and, like the drama's viewer, are driven on by the desire to see the ghost and the continual denial of this desire; their facial performances of stupefaction and Mortimer's imploring cries of 'Who is it?' are expressive of the position of the viewer, or, more precisely, the listener of the ghost play. This sequence in the ruin, and the later sequences in which the doubting doctor and the local priest are drawn into the search, can therefore be read as an enactment of the frustrations of Gothic television (the desire to see which must be constantly thwarted in order to maintain suspense/atmosphere). Indeed, when the camera briefly cuts away from these 'performances of listening' to look into the space of the ruins, it is almost lost for something to look at: it tracks aimlessly round the edge of a wall to find nothing on the other side and at the end of the scene (just before the cut to a commercial break), as the two men stalk past the camera, it remains

focused for a good deal of time on an ‘empty’ shot of the ruin, as the howling wind grows louder and continues after the fade to black over the *Mystery and Imagination* ident card (see fig. 1.2).

In these moments the camera reinforces the relative unimportance of the visual image in establishing tension and mood by showing the viewer nothing; as with radio. ‘The Open Door’ is reliant on sound rather than image to tell its story. Moreover, as in a radio play, sound is not only used to imply the presence of the supernatural, but is also utilised in the episode for more mundane narrative purposes: to signify transition from day to night, where a static, ‘empty’ long shot of the old ruins is first shown accompanied by the sound of owls hooting and then by birds singing, or to signify transition from one location to another (through the use of incidental orchestral music). In a move which emphasised the importance of sound in this teleplay, the *TV Times* article accompanying ‘The Open Door’ unusually focused on the creation of sound effects for the episode (more usually with *Mystery and Imagination*, a full page article was given over to an interview of the actor in the central role of the week’s episode). In this article the weekly interview was given by the actress Amanda Walker who played the ghost’s voice. The interview begins with description from the script: ‘Loud whimpering cry... shuddering moan... sobbing sigh... pitiful cry... Just a few of the sound effect instructions on the script of “The Open Door”’ (Davis 1966, 8), instructions which clearly emphasise the inherent ‘aurality’ of the episode, and continues to detail the work involved in producing the audio effects of what Dr. Simpson describes in the teleplay as a ‘phonetic disturbance’.

Whilst this teleplay differed greatly from other episodes of *Mystery and Imagination*, which can be described as inheriting the gross visuality of other contrasting traditions of the Gothic (discussed below), it can be seen as forming part of

a wider tradition of suggestive, restrained storytelling on television which also characterises other ghost story adaptations during this period and later. The nomination of ‘restraint’ as applied to this episode clearly refers to *visual* restraint rather than aural reticence: indeed, a reviewer in *The Times* commented that ‘[t]he haunting voice in the ruins provided the most chilling experience the series has so far brought’ (quoted in Haining 1993, 239), suggesting that ‘The Open Door’ eschewed restraint in its sound design rather successfully, offering aural rather than visual flourishes. However, the episode’s refusal to visually display its ghost finds it in keeping with the suggestive tradition of Gothic storytelling that was also taken up on the BBC in the M.R. James adaptations which formed a large part of the channel’s annual *Ghost Story for Christmas* series during the 1970s. In fact, the makers of *Mystery and Imagination* produced a number of James adaptations during its first three seasons¹¹, but it is this BBC series which is most frequently associated with the work of this ghost story writer.

Unlike the weekly anthology series, *Ghost Story for Christmas* was an annual series shown some time between the twenty-second and twenty-eighth of December each year between 1971 and 1978, and which held its senior personnel from one year to the next (namely producer Rosemary Hill, director/producer Lawrence Gordon Clark, and cameraman John McGlashan). The notion behind the series was to produce a television version of classic ghost stories which referenced the tradition of oral ghost storytelling at Christmas, and from 1971 to 1975 these stories were the adapted work of Montague Rhodes James (1862-1936), a scholar and provost from Eton and King’s College, Cambridge who specialised in writing short ghost fiction, ostensibly to entertain a group of friends who would meet in his chambers at King’s College every

¹¹ ‘The Tracate Middoth’, ‘Lost Hearts’, ‘Room 13’, and ‘Casting the Runes’.

Christmas Eve¹². Before *Ghost Story for Christmas* is discussed in detail however, it is worth looking back to the BBC's other James adaptations in order to contextualise this series.

During the 1940s and 50s, readings and dramatisations of several of James's ghost stories had been broadcast on BBC radio, on the Home Service, the Light Programme, and *Children's Hour*, and it is therefore unsurprising that James's stories were again to prove popular with the domestic audience in the form of television drama. Perhaps partly as a response to the ITV's success with the James adaptations on *Mystery and Imagination*, and also within the remit to produce innovative television drama, in May of 1968 the BBC broadcast their own adaptation of M.R. James's 'Oh Whistle and I'll Come to You, My Lad'¹³, adapted, directed, and produced by Jonathan Miller, and starring Michael Hordern as the central protagonist, the bumbling Professor Parkin. Miller's adaptation was framed by the BBC as arts television (it was commissioned by the Arts Features department as part of the *Omnibus* series) and was remarkable in both its sparse, economical direction and Hordern's minimal performance, elements which the BBC were quick to highlight in the publicity material for this production. The press release on the second broadcast of *Whistle and I'll Come to You* (on the twenty-seventh of July, 1969) calls the programme 'an unconventional adaptation' and states,

Like all [Miller's] work, it is remarkable, both for its uncanny sense of period and atmosphere, and for the quality of the actors' performance.

Most of the dialogue in this film was improvised, and when this film was first shown just over a year ago, most critics were agreed that Michael

¹² The later episodes were an adaptation of Charles Dickens' 'The Signalman' (BBC, 1976), and two original teleplays, 'Stigma' (BBC, 1977) and 'The Ice House' (BBC, 1978)

¹³ The title for the Miller adaptation was in fact shortened to *Whistle and I'll Come to You*.

Hordern's performance as the temporarily deranged professor was a highly impressive tour de force. (BBC, 1969)

Miller used James's ghost story to explore new ways of working (mainly through the improvisation of dialogue) and had been employed by the BBC to showcase his skill as a director, in keeping with the notion that television drama in the 1960s was a platform for new talent, or, more correctly, imported talent from the theatre. Furthermore, this notion of the adaptation's 'quality' is also referred to by the programme's 'afterlife': in 2001 *Whistle and I'll Come to You* was one of the first of the BFI's 'Archive Television' DVD releases, advertised as 'a series of releases from *bfi* video publishing aiming to provide access to key television programmes preserved in the National Film and Television Archive'¹⁴, and has also been screened theatrically at the National Film Theatre in 2001 and Nottingham Broadway's *Out of Sight* film and television archive festival in 2000 (the theatrical distribution of Gothic television is discussed at some length in the following chapter of this thesis).

This 'artiness' was, however, felt by some to be a kind of false lure set up by the BBC, and drew direct, somewhat unfavourable comparisons between Miller's adaptation and the ITV's highly popular *Mystery and Imagination*. In an article in *The Stage and Television Today*, Allan Prior questioned the marketing strategies of these two programmes:

Anything on ITV inevitably gets a rather popular, somewhat patronising treatment in press write-ups... This may have something to do with the way it is presented to the press by the Press Offices of the ITV companies. Even if the piece is *art*, they would never dream of saying so in their "handouts" because this is not the way they want it presented...

¹⁴ From the DVD packaging of *Whistle and I'll Come to You*.

The BBC do not push or popularise. Also they do not advertise... They are part of the literary and cultural establishment and all that. Ipso facto, they must put out the best programmes. Well they very often do. But... if this piece had been included in ABC's *Mystery and Imagination* series (and some very distinguished writers were) would it have got anything like the same attention? I fear not. I'm delighted for Dr. Miller's sake that his adaptation got written-up. Did it get watched much, nobody knows, probably half the audience of any *Mystery and Imagination* production. (1968, 55)

This review clearly outlines a distinction between the BBC's and ITV's Gothic adaptations on television, particularly in relation to the ways in which they were marketed and received by television critics. Whereas *Mystery and Imagination* was identified as both quality *and* popular by Prior's write-up, Miller's adaptation was very much seen as 'high brow' television and assigned qualities of restraint and decorum even in the terms by which it was marketed.

Moreover, *Whistle and I'll Come to You* sought to uphold the tradition of restraint within the aesthetic of the Gothic fiction outlined as desirable by the Director of Home Broadcasting at the BBC in the 1950s, a suggestiveness which is also readily associated with the original stories of M.R. James, and which is noted by Julia Briggs in her examination of James's work:

When it comes to describing the source of fear, the ghost story writer must tread delicately. A certain vagueness, an element of mystery is essential... [V]ague allusions help to prod the imagination into action. They are also part of a more general use of understatement that characterises James's style. Implicit in the restrained, gentlemanly, even

scholarly tone is the suggestion that it would be distasteful to dwell on unpleasant details, and this consistent 'meiosis' serves to increase our apprehension. (1998, 105-6)

On television, this 'gentlemanly' restraint is transformed into the refusal of a sensational visual style in the representation of the ghostly figure in Miller's *Whistle...*, and in a constant deferral of the revelation of the ghost which haunts Professor Parkin. The drama is characterised by a certain stillness of shooting style, the narrative being comprised of a series of lengthy shots both inside the guesthouse and on the beach, shots which are static on the whole, with few pans and tilts following the movement of Parkin and the other guests. Much of Dick Bush's 'still' cinematography presents the viewer with beautiful but haunting images of a barren Norfolk coastline, the sheer emptiness of these shots suggesting that the sinister or supernatural may lurk invisibly either within or outside of the frame, and which translates the Jamesian sense of restraint to the screen successfully.

The Audience Research Report compiled by the BBC after the first broadcast of *Whistle...* suggests that amongst their sample audience, this emphasis on the creation of atmosphere over the development of action or dialogue was, to a certain extent, seen to be effective. The report states:

For about half [the viewers], it seemed, it was a most successful evocation of atmosphere, a fascinating interpretation of a basically simple story... the atmosphere of foreboding, of unspeakable unpleasantness to come, was built up with telling effect... it provided a spine chilling essay in the macabre, one in which atmosphere was all and lack of conventional dialogue served only to heighten the effect. (BBC, 1968)

Whilst many of the negative responses were also levelled at the programme's suggestiveness ('It was like reading a book with the last page missing' (ibid.), claimed one viewer), it is the former emphasis on actual physical sensation (spine chilling, hair raising, blood curdling), caused by a feeling of unease or the uncanny, which became almost the standard response to Gothic adaptation like Miller's (and later *Ghost Story for Christmas*).



Fig. 1.3: The ghost on the beach



Fig. 1.4: The ghost in the bedroom

There is also a certain reticence in the sound design and use of dialogue in *Whistle...*, in keeping with the sense of restraint demanded by the Jamesian ghost story. Much of the drama is filmed in silence (bar the sound of the wind blowing on the beach and around the guest house), and Michael Hordern's delivery of improvised dialogue is, on the whole, the muttering of repeated words or phrases like the absent minded ramblings of an old, rather distracted man. Furthermore, the ghostly figure which is called up by Parkin blowing an Anglo-Saxon bone whistle found in a coastal graveyard, remains, on the whole, indiscernible, portrayed by a series of glimpsed, dark, or distant images. Contrary to the acceptance of the existence of ghosts in James's fiction, when we do see or hear evidence of the presence of the malignant

supernatural figure, Miller's direction leads the viewer to believe that this manifestation of evil may in fact be a figment of Parkin's imagination. This is achieved by presenting the ghostly manifestation in a series of highly subjective shots, firstly in a dream sequence as a indiscernible figure on the beach, wreathed in swathes of silk (see fig. 1.3), and secondly in a number of shots in Parkin's bedroom of his sheets twisting into the shape of a figure (see fig. 1.4), which are rendered unreliable when Colonel Wilson enters and turns on the light, seeing nothing untoward. This understatement or restraint in Miller's drama is representative of the transference of James's desire to 'show less, and suggest more' onto television. This drama therefore 'laid the foundations' for Lawrence Gordon Clark's understated adaptations of some of M.R. James's other ghost stories.

Returning to *Ghost Story for Christmas*, it must be asked why the telling of these ghost stories was so popular at Christmas time. Was *Ghost Story for Christmas*, like *Mystery and Imagination*, seen by its makers as returning to earlier traditions of domestic/oral storytelling, in this case in relation to the traditions of a particular season? In a discussion of the 1975 episode of the series, 'The Ash Tree', Angela Carter discusses this penchant for fear at Christmas:

the Christmas ghost-story, the Christmas spine-chiller, horror for Christmas – somehow it's become part and parcel of the whole Dickensy seasonal myth of snow and holly and church bells and groaning boards... Christmas Eve... by suggestive candlelight or flicker of flame, the family gathers round an open hearth on which roasting chestnuts fizz and sputter, to scare themselves silly with whispered talk of spooks and ghouls and supernatural things. Nowadays, of course, television provides us with most of our supply of traditional Christmas fear – a fear that

might perhaps originate in some primeval memory of the fear of the death of the sun... The annual M.R. James adaptation is a television tradition, now: a more than satisfactory replacement for tales whispered round the hearth. (1975, 111-112)

Here Carter suggests that the *Ghost Story for Christmas* series somehow replaces traditions of oral storytelling at Christmas, reflecting a larger change in home entertainment; the family around the fire became the family around the television set from the nineteen forties onward, and thus the Christmas ghost story also transferred to this medium. However, this still does not answer the question of why the ghost story should be told at Christmas at all. Carter's analysis suggests that the season's pagan origins and the inherent fear that the sun would never return from the gloomy winter night are what inspires these tales, and thus reveals a wider concern with the supernatural forces of good and evil, death and rebirth at this time. In terms of television production and scheduling, the ghost story offers an entirely different incentive during the festive season, in that it is sold as 'special', season-specific programming, as part of the Christmas television package. The need to attract viewers at a time when ratings are at their highest, and families all over the country are settled into their living rooms watching the television, calls for the production of quality television drama such as *Ghost Story for Christmas* which conforms to the traditional Christmas Eve dramatic genre of the ghost story, having, as it were, a double 'pull' on the audience (the desire to watch quality television drama or the 'best of' television programming at Christmas, and the desire to be entertained by the supernatural). As Jane Root suggests, 'above all, it is the literary adaptation which has come to represent the most central component of "good television"' (1986, 75). Therefore, in the 1970s, *Ghost Story for Christmas* fulfilled both the need to attract viewers to

‘quality’ productions during a high-ratings period, and the desire of the viewer to partake in the reception of domestic ghost storytelling at Christmas time.

This dual remit was brought starkly into focus by the BBC’s recent revisitation of James’s Christmas ghost stories, a revisitation that owes a great deal to the series from the 1970s. In December 2000, the BBC broadcast *Christopher Lee’s Ghost Stories for Christmas*, a series of barely dramatised adaptations of M.R. James’s ghost stories which were framed by Lee, playing James, telling the stories in his rooms at Kings College to a group of students. These half hour episodes focused on the creation of an atmosphere of intimacy and suspense, with the act of oral story telling given narrative precedence over the occasional images of books/papers/illustration and isolated visual images from the stories, in keeping with the notion that James’s stories were in fact written to be vocalised rather than visualised.



Fig. 1.5: Nostalgic storytelling

At the beginning of each episode the story is framed by a sequence in which Lee is shown preparing his cosy, homely rooms at the college, intercut by shots of the students gathering together to visit James/Lee, thus directly reflecting on the ‘Christmassy’ domestic reception context with its open fire and romantic visions of the

hearth. This rather clever opening sequence, depicting people gathering to listen to a ghost story around the fire, offers a visualisation of exactly what the BBC were hoping viewers would do: continually turn up to watch and listen. It also demonstrates a clear nostalgia for Christmases past (as well as Christmas television of the past), a nostalgia which is enhanced by the warmly lit, soft-focus images of domestic storytelling (see fig. 1.5). In many ways the more recent 'ghost stories for Christmas' offer a more successful 'aesthetics of restraint' than Miller's *Whistle and I'll Come to You*, or Gordon-Clark's adaptations of the 1970s; by focusing on the act of reading rather than on the visualisation of James's stories, *Christopher Lee's Ghost Stories for Christmas* remain truer to the stories' literary and radiophonic heritage. However, in order to support this contention, it is necessary to elaborate on the exact ways in which *Ghost Story for Christmas* negotiated the problems of 'doing the Gothic' on television.

As stated above, *Ghost Story for Christmas* can be located within a tradition of the quality literary adaptation on television. Unlike *Mystery and Imagination* and many of the other Gothic anthology dramas on British television in the 60s and 70s, the series was shot on film and on location, with much attention paid to minutiae of period detail in recreating the 'heritage' settings of each drama; as such it might be seen to visually reference the cinematic stylishness of the filmic literary adaptation. However, there are significant differences between these Gothic adaptations and the more usual heritage dramas, differences which call into question the validity of applying the 'heritage' label to *Ghost Story for Christmas*. Specifically, in offering a dark and sinister version of the past (particularly the nineteenth century), the series can be isolated as a specific phenomenon or cycle within television production which might be more correctly termed 'feel-bad' heritage television drama.

In his examination of the heritage impulse in film (and in some television series such as *Brideshead Revisited* (Granada, 1982) and *Jewel in the Crown* (Granada, 1984)), Andrew Higson defines the heritage drama as a 'cycle of quality costume dramas' (1993, 109) but later goes on to reformulate that 'not all costume dramas are heritage films – which is to say that not all costume dramas have the same prestige cultural status, or the same engagement with conservative and elite heritage discourses' (Higson 1996, 237). Higson therefore suggests that the heritage film is essentially a costume drama (and, more often than not, a literary adaptation) with high cultural capital, which engages with a bourgeois notion of heritage which involves the representation of a very specific version of the past, a past which may be compared favourably to the present, a time when life was 'civilised' and national identity stable and unchanging. The heritage spectacle, in Higson's terms, is therefore inextricably linked to the project of making the British audience of the heritage text 'feel good' about their national past and their collective national identity, about belonging to a 'Great Britain, a United Kingdom' (1993, 110). Higson's argument is distilled in the following statements:

By turning their backs on the industrialised, chaotic present, [the heritage film makers] nostalgically reconstruct an imperialist and upper class Britain... The films thus offer apparently more settled and visually splendid manifestations of an essentially pastoral national identity and authentic culture... The films turn away from modernity toward a traditional conservative pastoral Englishness; they turn away, too, from the high-tech aesthetics of mainstream popular cinema. (ibid., 110-113)

The key term in understanding the development and uses of the heritage film and television cycles, at least as Higson sees them, is therefore that of 'nostalgia', a keen

sense of sentimental yearning for the past or a desire for what has been left behind or covered up by the passing of time. Higson goes on to describe a 'nostalgic gaze' inherent in the viewing of heritage film and/or television, which 'resists the ironies and social critiques so often suggested narratively by these films' in favour of a consumption of the past 'displayed as visually spectacular pastiche' (ibid. 109). It is therefore suggested that through the nostalgic gaze, narrative criticism of the era or society which is being represented within the heritage film or programme is somehow negated, offering the audience/viewer the more simple visual pleasures of the past, replacing any criticism of the time implied in the narrative with an overriding sense of nostalgia.

It may subsequently be proposed that Higson concludes that heritage film/television is somewhat 'dishonest', narratively presenting a less than idyllic past, whilst visually representing the spectacular beauty of a sanitised or 'cleaned-up' bygone age (although Monk (1996) and others have called this conclusion into question). However, whilst it is not proposed that *Ghost Story for Christmas* offers a more *authentic* version of the past, it can be seen as a very different version of the heritage text, which refuses the 'sanitation' of nostalgia. Both this series, and indeed other anthology dramas discussed in this chapter, offer the viewer narratives of fear and terror, set in a past which is not only visually marked by a sense of decay or dilapidation, but which is also disturbed or disrupted by uncanny happenings and supernatural events. The past of the Gothic adaptation on television is therefore a considerably less stable and pleasant place and time than that which is offered to the viewer in *Brideshead Revisited*, for example. If, as Higson suggests, 'nostalgia is always in effect a critique of the present, which is seen as lacking something desirable situated out of reach in the past. Nostalgia always implies that there is something

wrong with the present' (Higson 1996, 238), then what the Gothic or 'feel-bad' heritage adaptation does is remove the surety of the past as a haven or site of nostalgia. Whilst this idea is explored at greater length later in this thesis (in relation to the television adaptation of the female Gothic drama in the 1990s), it is important to note at this stage in the analysis of Gothic television that *Ghost Story for Christmas* retained the production values of the heritage drama, but rejected its attitude towards the past as a desirable place and time.

These high production values and the associated cultural kudos of the literary text can be seen as being bound to the 'gentlemanly restraint' of *Ghost Story for Christmas*, to the eschewing of cinematic and theatrical versions of Gothic horror, and to the desire to show less and suggest more within this series from the 1970s. In an interview with Rhys Williams (at the time of the broadcast of his more recent Gothic anthology series, *C'hiller*), Lawrence Gordon Clark said of his work that 'the unseen is much more frightening than the full-frontal Hollywood splat. M.R. James who was the master of ghost story telling, allows the veil to be drawn apart for a second, so you can look into the abyss' (Williams 1995, 17). In turn, Williams also describes this need to 'show less, suggest more' in the television ghost story:

instead of graphic depiction, [the programmes] focus on suggestion. The aim, they say, is to chill rather than shock. Partly because television is not best suited to carrying off big screen pyrotechnics, but mainly because they want to keep faith with the notion of a ghost story in its literary rather than cinematic tradition. (ibid.)

To outline the ways in which the 'full-frontal Hollywood splat' and 'big screen pyrotechnics' were both rejected and ultimately reverted to by the makers of *Ghost*

Story for Christmas, an analysis of the episodes 'Lost Hearts' (1973) and 'The Ash Tree' (1975) will be offered.

'Lost Hearts' tells the story of Stephen (Simon Gipps-Kent), the orphaned nephew of Mr. Abney (Joseph Connor) with whom he is sent to stay. On arrival at Abney's stately home, Stephen discovers that the ghosts of two children who had also been taken into the care of his uncle are haunting the house and grounds, attempting to warn Stephen that his uncle murdered them in order to remove their hearts and gain the secret of eternal life. On the eve of Stephen's own murder, the ghosts attack and kill Mr. Abney, thus freeing Stephen and themselves.

The beginning of 'Lost Hearts', as Stephen approaches his uncle's house in a carriage, poignantly introduces the viewer to the heritage setting as it is presented within the ghost story; this scene begins in a foggy country lane, where the first shot shows the carriage appearing out of the gloom, as if out of nowhere. As with other episodes of *Ghost Story for Christmas* (e.g. 'A Warning to the Curious' (1972), which owes a great deal to Miller's *Whistle and I'll Come to You*), the tremulous sound of a wind instrument (a flute in this case) is used as a means of establishing the chilling mood of the drama at this moment. The carriage and the costume of Stephen are in keeping with the detail of the mid-Victorian era expected from a heritage drama, and yet the profusion of dull colours, the browns and blacks of the interior of the carriage and Stephen's suit, gives the image the appearance of a sepia toned photograph; in short, a faded or degraded pictorial version of 'past-ness' familiar to the viewer.

At this moment in the narrative we are introduced to the two ghost children, an introduction which is made through two point of view shots from Stephen's perspective which reinforce the television ghost story's desire to suggest rather than clearly delineate the presence of the supernatural.



Fig. 1.6: Glimpsed ghosts



Fig. 1.7: Empty replacement shot

Firstly, Stephen is shown looking out of the carriage, and then a cut is made to a point-object shot of the two children standing in the opposite field, waving slowly (see fig. 1.6). Their appearance is marked by a lack of ‘colour’, their skin sallow and shadowed, and their clothes brown and black, the lack of vibrancy suggesting a degradation or decomposition of these figures that have appeared out of nowhere from the past. After a series of rapid reverse shots (a close-up of the spooked horse whinnying, followed by a repeat of the point-glance shot of Stephen looking, followed by a low angle shot of the driver steadying the horse), a cut is made back to a repeat point of view shot of the field, this time empty and without the ghost children (see fig. 1.7). This is the first time that the glimpsed supernatural character or object is shown within ‘Lost Hearts’, whereby the supernatural figure appears only briefly, and neither the audience nor Stephen can feel sure of the presence or visibility of these figures. By offering a dislocated ‘replacement’ shot (e.g. the same shot of the field, with and without the ghost children), Gordon Clark utilises the impermanence of the television image to create an uncanny point-of-view shot, a shot which is familiar and yet different from the same previously seen shot only moments ago. This uncanny replacement shot of the two ghost children is in fact seen again at the end of the drama

at Abney's funeral, when a sequence of facial close-ups (first of Stephen looking, then of Mrs. Bunch looking in the same direction) is interspersed by a long shot of the grounds of Abney's house, first with the children present in the centre of the shot, and then, when Bunch looks, with no one visible in shot. In these brief moments of revelation, the 'just glimpsed' images of the ghost children do not allow the drama to dwell on what might be potentially unpleasant or improper (the mutilated bodies of dead children) within the restrained, 'gentlemanly' ghost story. Furthermore, to a certain extent, this just glimpsed action, an essential element of the Gothic drama's restrained and 'gentlemanly' aesthetic, also challenges the image of the television viewer as distracted and therefore possessive of a glance, rather than a gaze, at the screen. The television ghost story in which moments of revelation are fleeting, and key figures are glimpsed on screen for a matter of seconds demands concentrated, rather than distracted, viewing in order to make sense of the narrative.



Fig. 1.8: Introducing the heritage house



Fig. 1.9: Introducing the Gothic house

As the carriage progresses towards its destination, and the title credits continue to appear on screen, the viewer is offered several of Stephen's travelling point of view shots of the countryside which surrounds the house. However, it is here that we see a

radically different version of pastoral England than that which we are used to in other, more benign (and more recent) versions of the television literary adaptation. Firstly, the pastoral idyll of the rolling English hills is replaced by the sinister gloom of a wooded landscape shrouded in mist and fog. Instead of wide open spaces (such as those portrayed in the extreme-long opening shots of the rolling lawns leading up to Netherfield Hall in *Pride and Prejudice* (BBC/A&E Network, 1995) (see fig. 1.8)) we are offered a landscape full of hidden spaces, the shade of the trees providing a visual metaphor for the dreadful secret which Stephen is threatened by throughout the rest of the narrative (see fig. 1.9). The woods in the opening of 'Lost Hearts' become interstitial spaces within the shot, representing a suggestion of the 'unseeable' (the grotesque horror of slaughtered children in this case), rather than the visual splendour of the past. Indeed, it is these apparently empty shots of the countryside or the night sky, repeated throughout the drama, which evoke the hidden secrets of Mr. Abney's house, almost as if the threatening or the uncanny were lurking beyond the margins of an apparently benign pastoral image.

As with the apparently 'empty' establishing shots of 'Lost Hearts', apparently unmotivated camera angles and unconfirmed point of view shots are also utilised in *Ghost Story for Christmas* to suggest an invisible or ghostly 'presence': such a usage is seen in 'The Ash Tree'. The narrative of this teleplay centres on the story of young man named Sir Richard Fell (Edward Petherbridge) who inherits a country home from his uncle, Sir Matthew (also played by Petherbridge), who died under suspicious circumstances. Sir Richard soon finds that the house is haunted by Anne Mothersole (Barbara Ewing), the woman his uncle had hanged as a witch, and who, it is insinuated, caused the death of Sir Matthew by setting her 'children', a group of

deformed tree goblins, on to him. At the end of the drama Sir Richard befalls a similar fate to his uncle.

During this episode, as Sir Richard is lying in bed at night, disturbed in his sleep by the voice of Lady Augusta (Lalla Ward), and then the singing/humming of Anne Mothersole, shots of the bed from various angles suggest the presence of Mothersole's ghost watching him sleep, but this watching presence is not confirmed with a reverse 'point-glance' shot of a ghostly figure. These unmotivated shots are in keeping with the ghost story's desire to show less and suggest more (within the Jamesian tradition), the pale blue lighting creating a ghostly 'atmosphere' rather than demonstrating the visible presence of the ghost. Furthermore, as in 'Lost Hearts', 'glimpsed' action is also utilised to display the presence of the supernatural for only a few seconds on screen, thus thwarting a desire on the viewer's behalf to see/confront the source of horror. By allowing the viewer to see the ghostly figure for only a brief moment, the image is consciously allowed to 'overlap' the imagined within the mind of both characters and viewers within the drama (did they really see a tall dark figure in black or did they imagine it?). This blurring of the boundaries of the seen and imagined in *Ghost Story for Christmas* is supported by the fact that the usual grammar of filmic expression of subjectivity is constantly thwarted: in structures of point of view, for example, the point-object shot, followed by the point-glance shot, is followed by the empty point-object shot, whereby both the viewer and the character on screen who believes that s/he has seen something is not able to confirm this sighting within the language of 'the look' on screen.

In 'The Ash Tree', restrictive framing is also used to produce the glimpsed action so essential to this 'show less, suggest more' version of Gothic television. For example, during the events which lead up to Sir Richard's death, the desire to witness

the horrific object or moment is constantly thwarted by a creative use of lighting, framing, and shot length which prolongs the moment of revelation for the audience. The following shot breakdown details this sequence¹⁵:

Shot One: Extreme close-up of Sir Richard's hand on the page of the bible.

Shot Two: Tracking shot in medium close-up of the ash tree's trunk. There appears to be a hairy ball/body climbing the tree, but shot is too dark to define more than an outline.

Shot Three: Quick extreme close-up, lasting one second, of a hairy body with spiders legs as it walks towards the camera (sound of babies gurgling).

Shot Four: Medium shot of moonlit floor. One hairy spider's leg comes into shot.

Shot Five: Close-up of Sir Richard's face. He has heard something.

Shot Six: Sir Richard's point of view of a page of his bible. Spidery legs appear from top left of frame (sound of babies gurgling).

Shot Seven: Close-up of Sir Richard's face as he turns towards a wizened hairy ball-like face on his shoulder, which cries. Camera pans away to the right.

Shot Eight: Repeat shot two, but more hairy bodies slightly visible.

Shot Nine: Medium-close shot of creatures crawling onto Sir Richard's chest.

Shot Ten: Repeat shot eight

¹⁵ Please note that no visual illustrations of this sequence can be included as the only existing copy of this episode is held in the National Film and Television Archive.

Shot Eleven: Close-up of Sir Richard's face. The creatures appear to be feeding from it.

Shot Twelve: Quick medium-long shot, lasting two seconds, from foot of the bed where we see many of the hairy creatures feeding on Sir Richard's body.

Shot Thirteen: Extreme long shot of the house. Anne Mothersole says in voice-over 'mine shall inherit' (repeated from an earlier flashback).

Whilst it is true that part of the motivation for keeping the creatures hidden and glimpsed will surely have been the poor quality of their appearance and puppetry¹⁶, the techniques employed in this scene ensure that the audience will be repeatedly thwarted in their desire to view the source of the horror. For example, in shot two of the sequence the exterior shot of the ash tree is so darkly lit that one cannot be sure what has been seen, and in shots four and six, the use of off-screen space to contain the monstrous puppets ensures that the imagined owners of the spidery legs will be far more frightening than the puppets are in reality. Indeed, in the following scene, as Mrs. Chiddick the housekeeper (Lucy Griffiths) discovers the body of Sir Richard, the pan round the room which represents her point of view just misses the departure of the last creature, out of the window (this is indicated by the characteristic rustling and gurgling of the goblins as the shot rests on the window). The fact that she, like the audience, has just missed the perpetrator of the horror, sees the camera work being used yet again to suspend the ghost story narrative long enough to take it towards its final revelation (the horrific scenes of the charred body of Anne Mothersole and the sound of her foetus-like brood screaming and dying as the eponymous ash tree is cut down and burnt), showing less and suggesting more until the very end of the narrative.



Fig. 1.10: The ghost children

Of all the *Ghost Story for Christmas* M.R. James episodes, it is perhaps ‘Lost Hearts’ which most fully visualises the spectral presence within the television drama, in the form of the ghost children who appear throughout the narrative, present in brief moments of haunting. Whilst their appearances are brief, they are clearly identified both in flashback and within various haunting sequences throughout. The children are marked as ghostly in rather a theatrical way, through the use of costume and make-up and an almost pantomime, zombie-like performance; indeed, as opposed to surrounding these figures with spectacular or spectral special effects, the shots of the ghost children are almost rendered black and white through the use of lighting/make-up (see fig. 1.10). Although in some senses the limited appearances of the ghost children make this television ghost story appear somewhat anti-spectacular, or indeed, anti-visual (not lingering on the presence of the supernatural), in this version of ‘Lost Hearts’ the ghost children are far more present throughout the narrative than they are in the original story, where Giovanni only appears to Stephen once, in a dream, until their final appearance at the end of the story. The television adaptation therefore

¹⁶ When seen briefly in shots seven, nine and twelve, the ‘goblins’ appear to have been constructed from stuffed nylon stockings and pipe cleaners, and are very much at odds with the high production values of heritage television drama

increases the presence of these characters at various points throughout the narrative in order to fulfil its status as a visual, rather than literary or non-visual, medium. It is the viewer's desire to view the ghostly or supernatural which seems to lie at the problematic crux of the television ghost story, and which constantly troubles the director's desire to be 'faithful' to James's story, to 'show less, and suggest more'.



Fig. 1.11: Revealing the moment of horror

Ultimately, Gordon-Clark's adaptation falls back on the desire to display the horrific or the abject at the end of 'Lost Hearts', perhaps garnering the same sense of disappointment attached to the final cut of Jacques Tourneur's film adaptation of M.R. James's 'Casting the Runes', *Night of the Demon*¹⁷. It appears as if the 'gentlemanly restraint' of James's ghost story can usually be taken only so far on an audio-visual medium, and that ultimately the viewer must be simultaneously 'rewarded' and disappointed by a presentation of the horrific moment, if not the spectacularly grotesque (as when the ghost boy, Giovanni, reveals his open, empty chest cavity as a warning to Stephen (see fig. 1.11) or, at the end of 'The Ash Tree', where the charred

¹⁷ The producer of this film decided that the film lacked substance, and overrode Tourneur's cut, adding the special effects of the 'demon' very close to the beginning of the narrative.

remains of Anne Mothersole are briefly revealed)¹⁸. At the end of James's version of 'Lost Hearts' it is never explicitly stated how Mr. Abney died ('It was the opinion of the coroner that Mr. Abney had met his death by the agency of some wild creature. But Stephen Elliott's study of the papers I have quoted led him to a very different conclusion' (1992, 19)). However, the sense of ambiguity offered here in the final paragraph of the story is not present in the televised version, which more fully represents the ensuing horror of Abney's death. A series of shots of the ghost children descending on the old man are cross-cut with his terrified face, his arm raised up above his head to protect himself, which is then followed by two shots of the children driving a sabre into their victim's chest. At this point in the teleplay the moment of horror is clearly displayed and the narrative departs from the restrained mode of the Gothic in no uncertain terms.

Display, innovation and (tele)visuality

Thus far, the history of the Gothic anthology drama on British television has been told as one of decorum and 'ultimate good taste', as bearing a close relationship to the narrative forms of both the literary ghost story and the BBC radio play. However, as noted in the introduction of this chapter, these were not the only Gothic heritages referred to by anthology drama of the 1960s and 70s in Britain. Simultaneously, a mode of Gothic television was developing which clearly referenced David Pirie's 'equally respectable Gothic line... which precisely depends upon the clear visual portrayal of every stage of action' (1973, 41), discussed in the introduction of this chapter. In keeping with the congruence of technological innovation in audio-visual

¹⁸ Obviously there are exceptions to this need for final revelation, such as Jonathan Miller's adaptation

media and the presentation of the Gothic as outlined in the introductory chapter of this thesis, developments in television production during the 1960s and 70s were fully exploited in a tradition of Gothic anthology drama which shunned the restraint and decorum of the M.R. James adaptations.

Returning to ABC's *Mystery and Imagination* for example, 'The Open Door' (discussed above) was in fact an uncharacteristic episode of this series, which was far more likely to feature adaptations more closely associated with the more visual modes of the Gothic, especially in the latter seasons produced by Thames Television. Whilst it was suggested previously that this series answered the demands of competition with a sense of respectability and 'literariness', it simultaneously created what might be termed a 'television of attractions', with diverse innovative visual styles forming a large part of the series' allure for potential audiences. It will therefore be argued in the latter part of this chapter that theatrical, cinematic, and ultimately *televisual* styles were taken on by the British Gothic anthology series of the 1960s and 70s. The word 'televisual' is used specifically here to refer to the mode outlined by John Thornton Caldwell as television which seeks to 'flaunt and display style' (1995, 5) and those programmes which 'battle for identifiable style markers and distinct looks in order to gain audience share within the competitive broadcast flow' (ibid.). It should also be noted at this point in the analysis that Caldwell identifies television which exploits a cinematic style as being televisual, thus departing from the use of the term 'televisual' which refers to medium specificity. As Caldwell suggests, 'cinematic values brought to television spectacle, high production values, and feature-style cinematography' (ibid., 12), thus arguing that television which textually references cinema is inherently televisual.

of *Whistle and I'll Come to You* (discussed above).

Caldwell's analysis of televisual television is mainly confined to the 1980s and 90s in the United States, but the terms by which he defines televisuality can equally be applied to the output of a series like *Mystery and Imagination* in Britain in the 1960s and early 1970s, also a time of intense competition within television broadcasting. Responding to this competition, television production in 1960s Britain can be seen as an industry in which significant production innovations were being made and exploited. To recap on S.S. Prawer's analysis of the Gothic anthology series of the 1960s, discussed in the previous chapter exploring critical approaches to Gothic fictions, Prawer argues that these programmes, made under 'the restraints of money, location and shooting time' (1980, 20), were prompted to develop 'flexible, sophisticated technical equipment, specially adapted to the lower definition of the TV screen... to disguise this' (ibid.). Furthermore, Prawer states that the medium-specific production of the Gothic anthology series on television led to 'the rediscovery of avant-garde devices – violently clashing images, unusual angles of vision, frozen frames, shooting through gauze, negative prints, etc.' (ibid., 21). This description of television's formal experimentation *despite of* technological and budgetary restrictions precisely describes the case of *Mystery and Imagination*, as well as other later Gothic anthology drama series such as *Supernatural*, or the one-off adaptation of Stoker's *Dracula*, *Count Dracula*, directed by Phillip Saville and featuring Louis Jourdan in the title role, both broadcast in 1977.

In their analysis of the development of forms of television drama, Carl Gardner and John Wyver discuss the theatrical heritage of the early teleplay, arguing that the dramatic output of the BBC consisted of 'televised stage plays, "faithfully" and tediously broadcast from the theatre, or reconstructed in the studio, even down to intervals, prosceniums and curtains' (1983, 115); the authors subsequently go on to

argue that this theatricality precluded any sense of innovation in dramatic television production in the 1950s. Whilst, as suggested in the introduction to this chapter, Gardner and Wyver's approach to the single play has been successfully contested in the work of Jason Jacobs, their work offers a clear indication of the ways in which television's relationship with theatre has been viewed: theatre in their analysis is seen as a negative influence which prevented television from 'moving on' to discover its own, medium-specific dramatic forms. However, by looking towards *Mystery and Imagination* as an anthology drama series which quite obviously referenced theatrical style in both its performances and in its mise-en-scène, we can begin to see the ways in which a significant representational heritage of the Gothic (Gothic theatre) was alluded to in individual episodes, without confining the entire series to the presentation of theatrical forms of television drama.

To begin by examining theatrical performance styles within the Gothic television anthology, one of the first Thames episodes of *Mystery and Imagination* will be discussed: 'Dracula', adapted from Bram Stoker's novel by Charles Graham and directed by Patrick Dromgoole. The episode, a very liberal adaptation of the novel¹⁹, introduces Dracula (Denholm Elliott) almost immediately, and figures him not as an insubstantial shadow or suggested presence, but as a rather 'hip' looking individual with trim goatee and square shades, quite similar, in fact, to the appearance of Gary Oldman as the Count in Francis Ford Coppola's more recent adaptation (*Bram Stoker's Dracula* (US, 1992)). Elliott as Dracula is extremely theatrical, in that he offers a performance which both plays on the closeness of television production (endless narrowing of eyes and arching of eyebrows in close-up) and exploits particular conceits of Gothic stage acting which defy television drama's tendency

towards naturalism, seen in expansive arm gestures and typical ‘vampirous’ body movements, such as the exaggerated lowering over his victims. Indeed, at the time of broadcast Elliott stated of his own performance that ‘you can’t overdo playing Dracula... the fatal thing is to try to be subtle’ (Anon. 1968c, 9).



Fig. 1.12: Theatrical performance

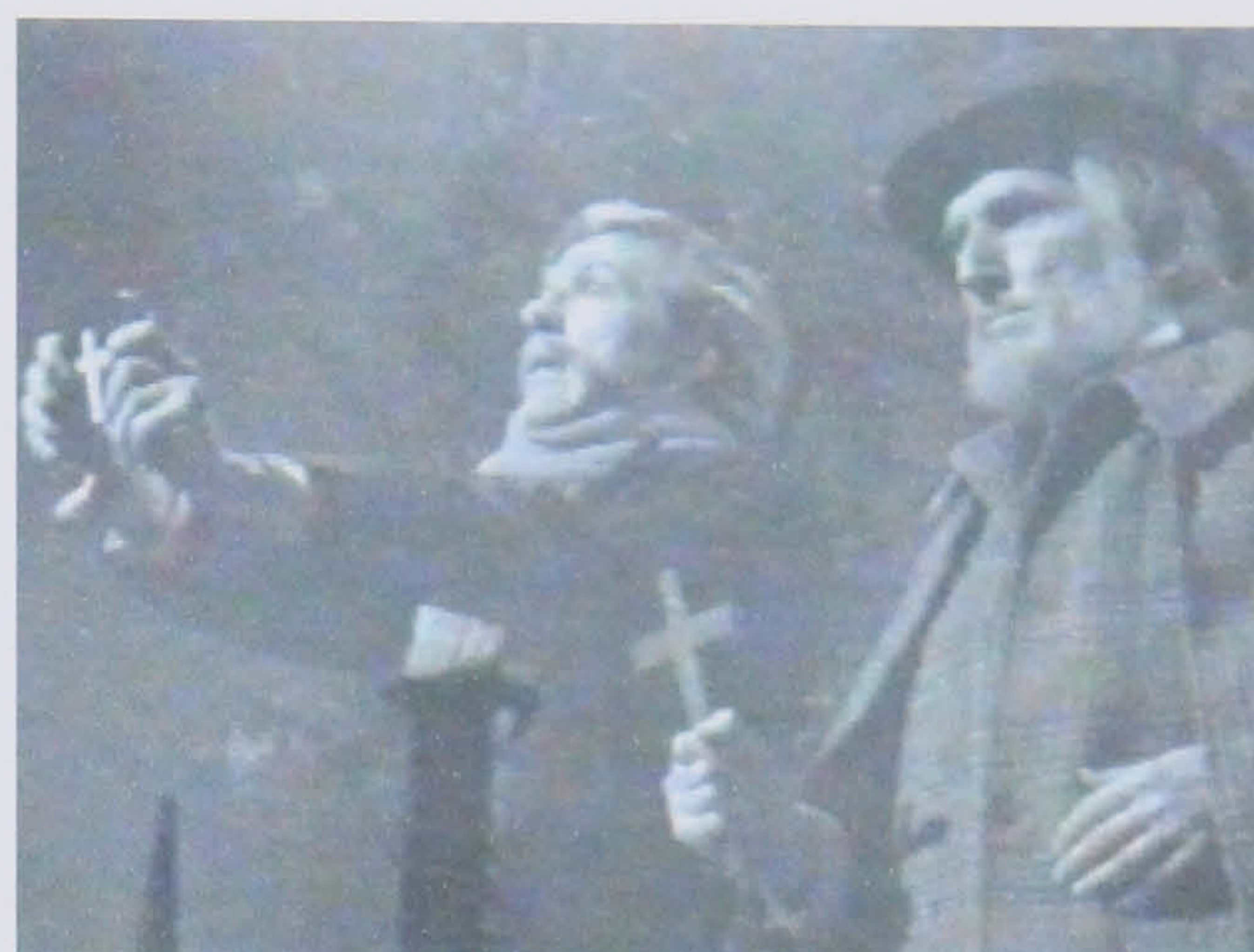


Fig. 1.13: Theatrical performance

Often in this episode, this ‘theatrical’ performance to a static camera replaces dialogue. For example, in the final confrontation between Dr. Seward (James Maxwell), Van Helsing (Bernard Archard), and Dracula, all conflict and emotion is represented by the synthesised, harpsichord-sounding sound track and the facial and bodily performance of Maxwell, Archard, and Elliott, as the actors strike poses rather than engaging in confrontational dialogue (see figs. 1.12-1.13). In a wide-ranging discussion of performance styles on television, Karen Lury has suggested that the theatrical actor such as Denholm Elliott brings a certain ‘expressiveness’ to television performance, and argues that theatrical performance on television is most accurately characterised by the fact that ‘the theatrical performer can be seen to *be* acting’ (1995, 123). In the aforementioned instance, these moments from ‘Dracula’ demonstrate this

¹⁹ Liberal in the sense that the character Renfield is replaced in this version by an insane Jonathan

precise mode of self-conscious acting in which the very activity of performance is highlighted or showcased.

However, in relation to Gothic theatre, it is not enough to simply define all 'excessive' performance in *Mystery and Imagination* as theatrical; this nomination does not take into account the specificity of different 'types' of Gothic theatrical performance which are replicated in the series. Whereas the performance of Elliott as Dracula conforms to the acting style of the Gothic theatre of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (with its grand gestures and arched eyebrows), a detailed description of two other performances, from 'Uncle Silas', an episode from the same season of *Mystery and Imagination* adapted from Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's novel, will outline specifically the presence of the Victorian melodramatic modes of Gothic, Grand Guignol performance. This episode, which focuses on the figure of Maud Ruthyn (Lucy Fleming), who is left in the care of her wicked and drug-addled uncle, Silas Ruthyn (Robert Eddison) when her father dies, offers the standard female Gothic narrative of the young girl trapped in a menacing stately home, who is abused by an older man²⁰: as such it presents an opportunity for the exaggerated, theatrical performances of victimhood and villainy typical of Victorian melodrama.

In keeping with the fact that *Mystery and Imagination* was to be described two years later by Anthony Lejeune in the *TV Times* as 'the nearest modern equivalent of Victorian melodrama' (1970, 13), the eponymous character of 'Uncle Silas' can be seen as the epitome of the villain on the Victorian stage. Aside from the fact that his appearance fits this type (dusty, black, ill-fitting suits, long straggly grey hair, and a heavily shadowed, gaunt face), his gesture and intonation reflect the easily

Harker, and all of the action takes place in London, ostensibly after Harker and Count Dracula have returned from Transylvania.

²⁰ Please note that these female Gothic narratives are discussed at greater length in chapter four of this thesis.

recognisable villainous performances of the late nineteenth century melodrama; indeed, the camera angles and shot composition employed to frame this performance (such as the extreme low angle) often accentuate such standard theatrical gestures. For example, on Ruthyn's introduction into the narrative, the glowering menace of the villain looking down on his potential victim for the first time (see fig.1.14) is intensified by the low angle of the shot. Another accentuation of the melodramatic style of performance is also made possible through the look of the camera, whereby the facial close-up is used to highlight the theatrical 'aside' typical of Victorian melodrama. As Silas Ruthyn discovers the dead body of his cohort, Madame de la Rougiere (Patience Collier), he turns to the camera, acknowledging its presence (see fig. 1.15), and, by extension, the presence of the viewer, an action which was atypical of dramatic television performance, but more typical of the relationship between performer and audience in nineteenth century theatrical melodrama.



Fig. 1.14: Low-angle shot of the villain

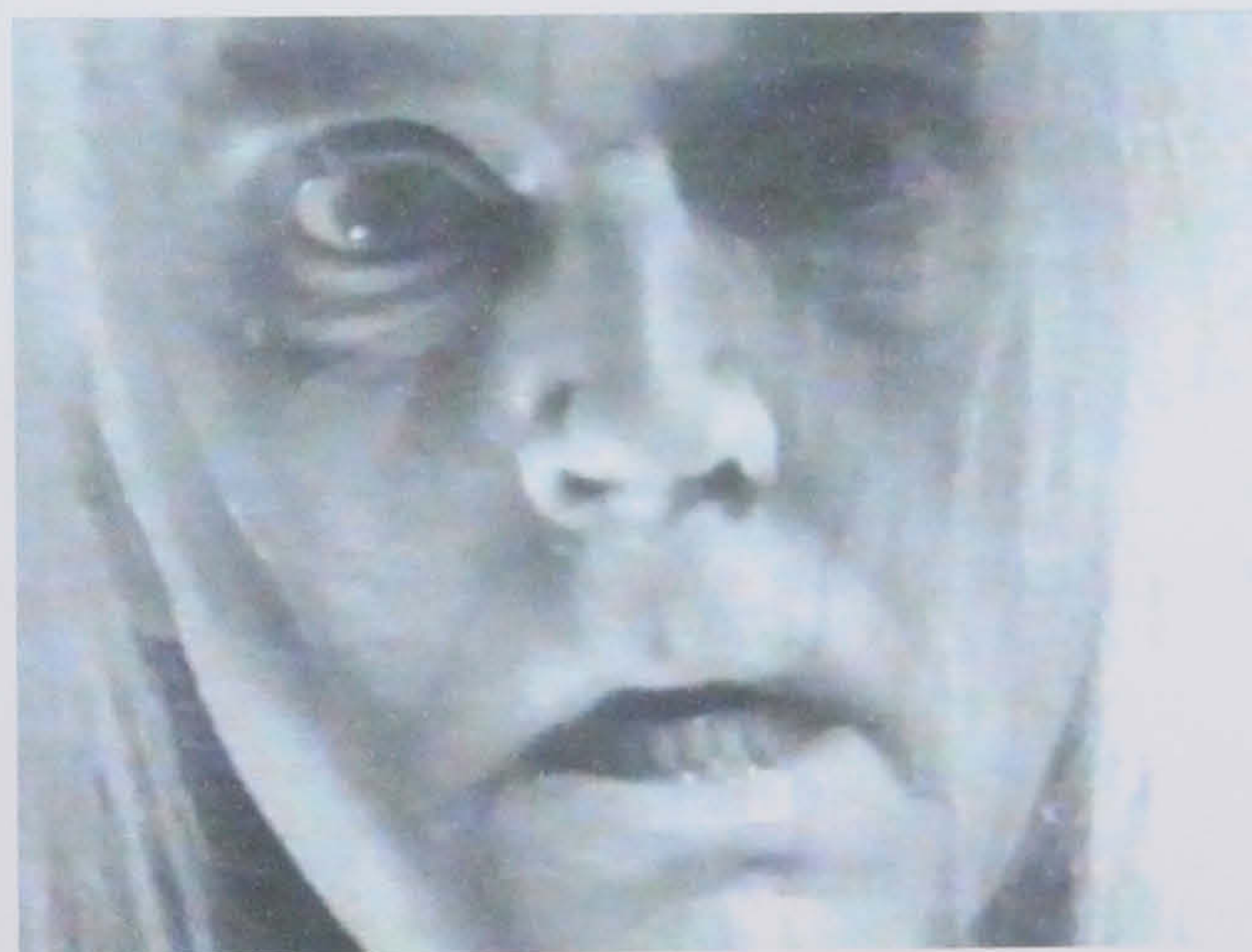


Fig. 1.15: Close-up as a theatrical aside

The figure of Madame de la Rougiere, the governess to Ruthyn's niece and his covert partner in crime, also presents a theatrical style of performance; indeed, this character could have been directly lifted out of the eighteenth century theatre of

revolutionary France, based on a 'Madame Guillotine' or *tricoteuse* characterisation. As Madame de la Rougiere, Patience Collier pantomimes this grotesque character in a series of cackling appearances throughout the narrative, and her heavy black costume, makeup, and wig (which she removes to terrify her young charge with her grotesque bald head, in a moment reminiscent of the burgeoning body-horror of the Grand Guignol theatre) all associate her with this particular theatrical performance style.



Fig. 1.16: Posing and performing

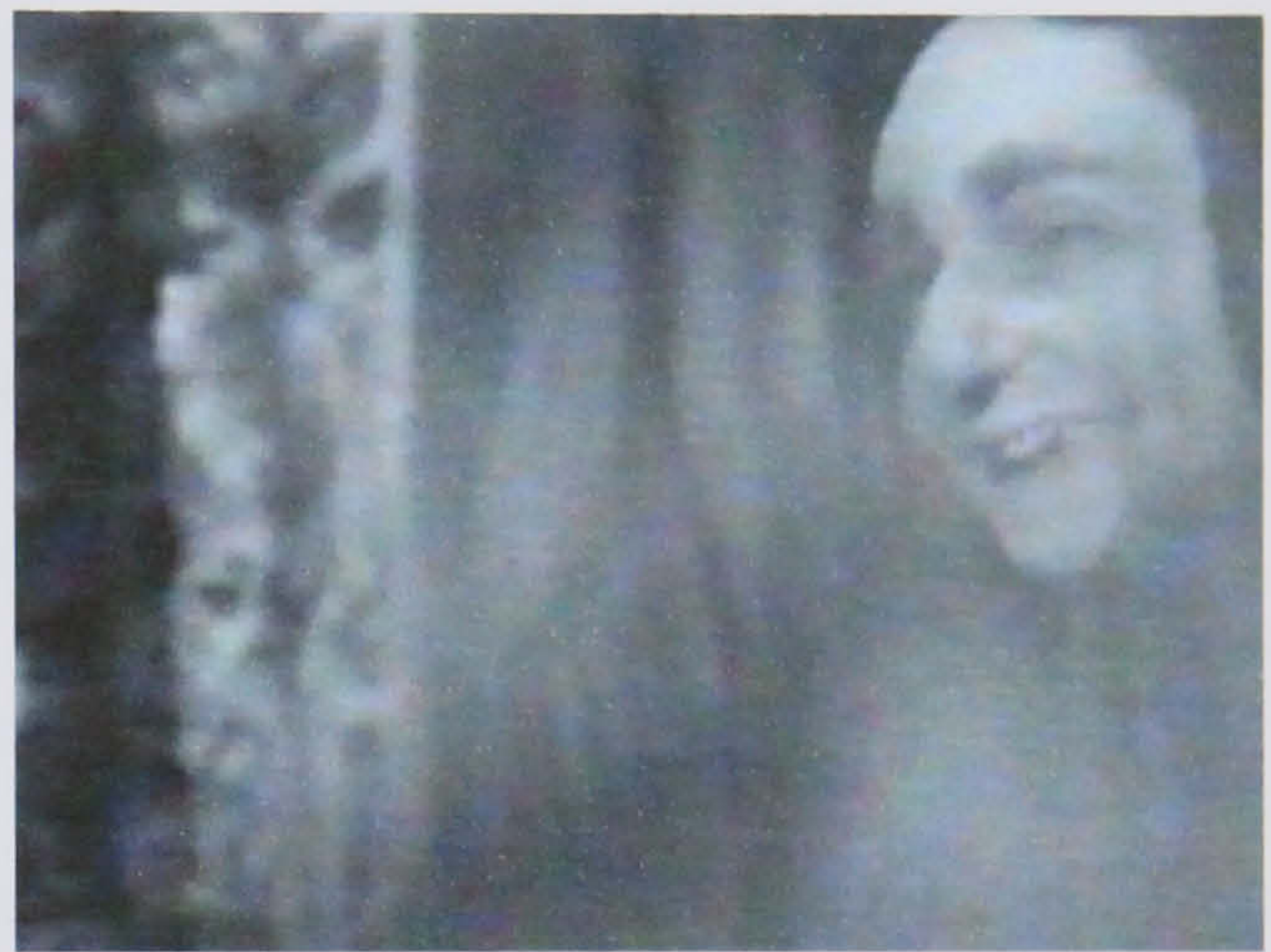


Fig. 1.17: Pulling aside the curtain

She often appears to be self-consciously performing both to the camera and to Maud as her diegetic audience, as in an scene where Rougiere/Collier offers a rendition of the trance-like intonations of the Phantasmagoria showman (a moment which has little or no bearing on furthering the narrative). Standing by the door to a crypt (see fig. 1.16), she announces 'Come meet my friends, Monsieur Cadaver and Monsieur Skeleton. See me die here today a little time and be among them', as Maud Ruthyn screams and runs; here, Rougiere/Collier's exaggerated facial expression and arm movements, as well as her self-conscious positioning against a suitably Gothic setting (the arched door to a crypt), mark out her performance as inherently theatrical. Indeed, as Madame de la Rougiere is reintroduced later in the narrative, and Maud learns that

she has been part of Ruthyn's plot all along, Rougiere/Collier quickly reveals herself by pulling aside a piece of cloth held over her face (see fig. 1.17). This unveiling, reminiscent of pulling aside a stage curtain, further emphasises the theatrical nature of her performance; to give a further example, the curtain conceit is also utilised in 'Dracula' where the camera tilts up from Lucy's (Susan George) dead body to a static shot of the heavy velvet curtains which ends the 'act'.

Such is the extent of *Mystery and Imagination's* theatricality that both the structure and the mise-en-scène of each episode also reflect upon the representational heritage of Gothic drama on the stage, to the extent that each advert break in the latter two seasons was framed by overlaid titles announcing the beginning or end of each 'act', rather than the segmentation of the narrative into 'parts', as was more usual for television drama at the time. Visual references to theatrical space are also contained within the mise-en-scène of these Gothic teleplays; for example, the sinister mansion of 'Uncle Silas' features a proliferation of archways in the Gothic architectural style which also act as a kind of proscenium arch or frame for the theatrical performances of Eddison, Collier and Fleming, and whilst the narrative is not confined to the presentation of action within these frames, at key moments within the drama a sense of theatrical performativity is heightened by the presence of a diegetic proscenium frame (as in the moment where Maud explores her uncle's house for the first time).

In addition to this visual referencing of the theatre, designers of the studio setting of many of the teleplays in this anthology series negotiated the problem of low-budget production by producing two-dimensional sets which did not attempt to replicate locations realistically, but rather utilised theatrical conventions of stage design.



Fig. 1.18: Theatrical setting



Fig. 1.19: Theatrical setting

For example, the opening shots of the 1970 episode, 'Sweeney Todd' (see figs. 1.18-1.19) reveal a clearly 'flattened' street scene as the central location of the episode, with the rest of London referred to in the narrative by a one-dimensional painted backdrop featuring an artistic rendition of the dome of St. Paul's cathedral, very much in keeping with theatrical conceits of stage setting. Subsequently the limitations of studio production are bypassed: no attempt is made towards creating a naturalistic setting within the confines of the studio, nor is location shooting often utilised, but rather a space is created for the drama which draws attention to the fact that *Mystery and Imagination* forms part of a wider theatrical tradition of Gothic presentation. Whilst Gardner and Wyver (1983) might see these blatant references to theatrical drama as backward-looking, evidencing television's own lack of medium-specific performative or aesthetic traditions, it might be more appropriate to read these references to theatre in the late sixties and early seventies as self-conscious referencing of a number of established Gothic theatrical traditions. Thus are these episodes of *Mystery and Imagination* rendered complex networks of allusions to earlier dramatic presentations of the Gothic, allusions which, it will be argued below, are not confined

to theatre but which draw on theatrical drama as much as they do cinematic traditions of the Gothic.

As implied above, the series did not simply turn towards theatre to produce a more emphatically *visual* version of the Gothic for television. Even more blatantly, *Mystery and Imagination* utilised cinematic forms of the Gothic to create ‘looks’ for individual episodes, drawing on diverse filmic traditions, from the mise-en-scène of German Expressionism to the dilapidated excess of the British Hammer horror films, to produce an inherently cinematic televisual style.



Fig. 1.20: Expressionist coffin



Fig. 1.21: Expressionist coffin

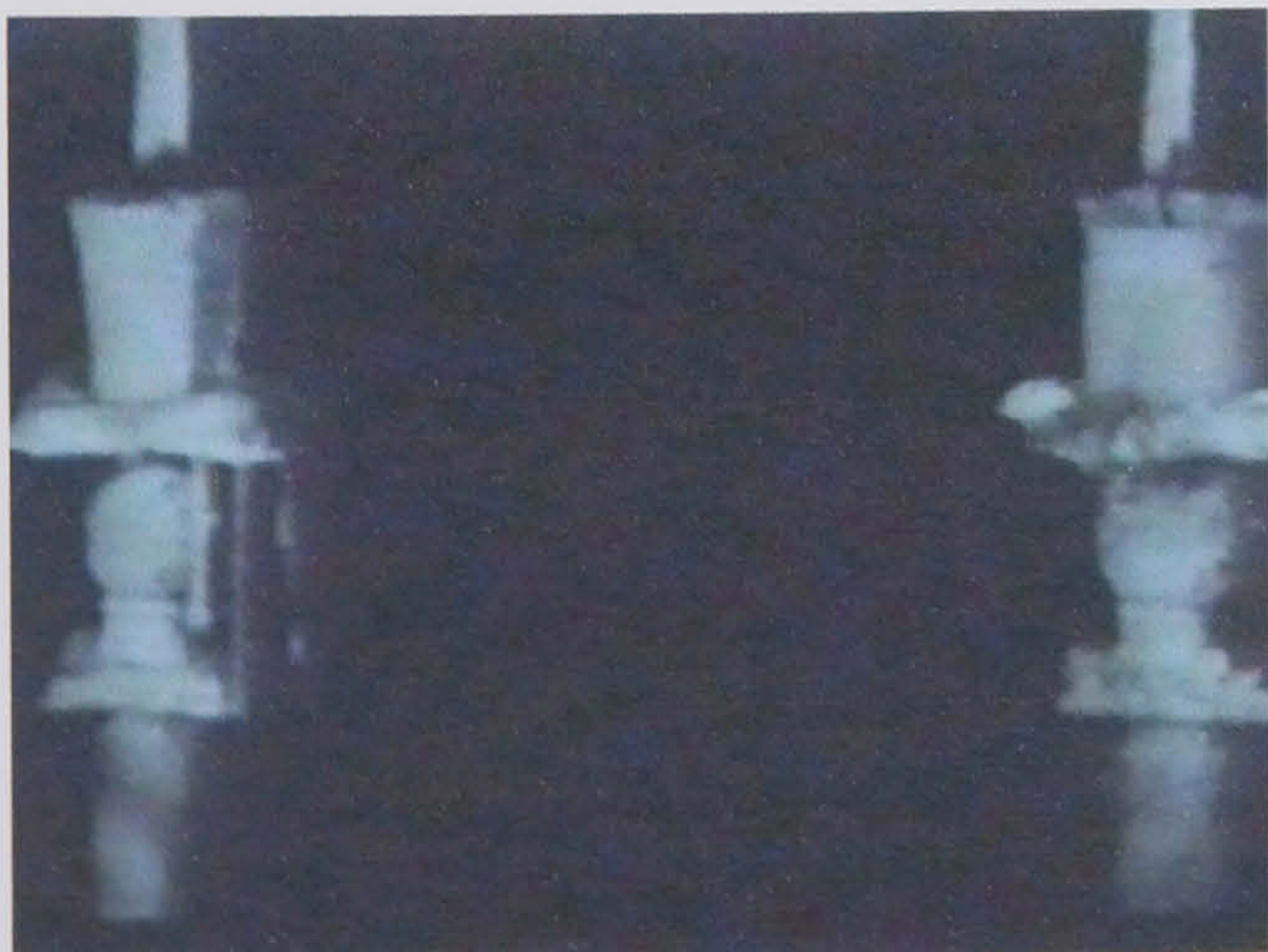


Fig. 1.22: Two-dimensional candles



Fig. 1.23: Breaking out of the coffin

The episode 'The Fall of the House of Usher', transmitted the week before 'The Open Door' which remained so faithfully 'anti-visual' (as discussed above), clearly acknowledges this cinematic Gothic heritage, in the form of an homage to German Expressionist cinema within its opening sequence. Beginning unusually without Beckett/Buck's introduction, the episode opens, after the credits, on a three shot sequence which is clearly derivative of the striking images of Gothic horror in German expressionist cinema, such as the coffin of the sleepwalking Cesare in *Das Kabinett des Doktor Caligari* (Robert Weine, Germany, 1920) (see fig. 1.20) or the splintered coffin which reveals Max Schrek's grotesque face in *Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens* (F. W. Murnau, Germany, 1922) (fig. 1.21). The first shot of the sequence is a medium close-up of two two-dimensional candles, accompanied by a fanfare of trumpets and kettle-drums (see fig. 1.22), from which the camera tracks past the candles to a high angle shot of the top of a coffin, surrounded by four more two-dimensional candles, and then slowly zooms in to the top of the coffin. Following this shot, a cut is made to a low angle, dimly lit shot of a pair of hands scratching frantically at the inside of the coffin lid, as blood drips down the fingers, and then a cut is made to a medium tracking shot towards the coffin, past the two-dimensional candles, and onto the lid of the coffin as it is pushed through from the inside and the bloody hands break out (see fig. 1.23); as the camera tracks into the hands, a dissolve is made into the black surface of a pool. During this short sequence which sets the tone and mood for the rest of the episode, the lack of dialogue, the dramatic extra-diegetic score, the two-dimensional properties and minimalist set, and the isolated images of the scrabbling hands and the coffin, all mark this introduction as a moment of heightened expressionism. This is a sequence which exists outside of the flow of narrative information (the main thrust of the narrative following Richard Buck's

developing relationship with the Ushers and their inevitable downfall), to express the more abstract concerns of episode (darkness and illumination, the insufferable claustrophobia of the domestic space, and ultimately the dread and horror of being buried alive), which is achieved through a short series of connected images, rather than through dialogue and exposition, just as the symbolic empty shots of the night sky which punctuate this episode reflect on the fear of supernatural power and otherworldly forces. This sequence, and the episode as a whole, are therefore in keeping with S.S. Prawer's notion that Gothic drama on television negotiated its aesthetic limitations (low budgets, studio production, etc.), and in doing so precipitated 'the rediscovery of avant-garde devices' (1980, 21). Working within the production constraints of television, *Mystery and Imagination's* version of 'The Fall of the House of Usher' emphasises the symbolism of Poe's story, drawing on an earlier art cinema tradition of Gothic visualisation (German Expressionism) for its stylistic innovations.

It is also of note that the credit sequence of this episode states that Poe's story has been 'Freely Adapted by David Campton': in his adaptation, Campton realises what Poe leaves unexpressed (he shows more and suggests less). Campton makes explicit the nature of the Ushers' hereditary madness (an uncontrollable sadism), and by adding the 'back story' of Richard Beckett's abandonment of his fiancée in favour of his blind love for Madeleine Usher, he more fully ties the Gothic narrative to a sense of domestic trauma. Indeed, one can speculate that this change is important, if not essential, in re-domesticating the Gothic narrative. Furthermore, the freedom of this adaptation evidences artistic license in Gothic television, rather than slavishly televising the literary text, or aiming to produce a television version of the suggestive radio play (as outlined in the first part of this chapter).

However, the cinematic style most obviously referenced by many *Mystery and Imagination* episodes is that of the British horror cinema of the Hammer and Amicus studios, enjoying a heyday before, during and after the production of this television anthology series. This heyday began in the mid to late fifties with the production of the Hammer/Terence Fisher adaptations *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957) and *Dracula* (1958), and ran well into the 1970s with the Amicus portmanteau films such as *The House that Dripped Blood* (Peter Duffell, 1970) and *Asylum* (Roy Ward, 1972). The Amicus films also remind us that the relationship between British Gothic cinema and television is not necessarily one-sided, with television ‘feeding off’ cinematic versions of the Gothic. The proliferation of the portmanteau format from this studio in the late sixties and early seventies, whereby three or four short stories were grouped together within a single film, framed by frequently implausible devices for storytelling during each film, might in fact be seen as British horror cinema referencing television’s anthology format. Peter Hutchings (2002) offers a thorough account of the origins of the portmanteau format within the output of the Amicus studios and, whilst he doesn’t directly make the link between anthology television and the portmanteau film, draws attention to the fact that studio heads, Max J. Rosenberg and Milton Subotsky, had come to Amicus from television in the US and that they frequently featured adaptations of stories from writers such as Robert Bloch and Richard Matheson (whose work had previously been popular in anthology series in the US²¹).

Returning to Graham and Dromgoole’s adaptation of Bram Stoker’s ‘Dracula’ for *Mystery and Imagination*, this teleplay can be seen to encapsulate both the Hammer-esque dilapidated Gothic décor in the Westons’ house and Dracula’s mansion, and the burgeoning body horror of the female vampires, who appear in a

²¹ For example, both Bloch and Matheson’s work featured heavily in the NBC anthology series from

sequence in which Jonathan Harker (Corin Redgrave), ensconced in a mental asylum, remembers his time in Transylvania. The heavily sexualised sense of threat which the female vampires pose in this episode clearly references Hammer films such as *Kiss of the Vampire* (Don Sharp, 1964), or *Dracula, Prince of Darkness* (Terence Fisher, 1965), released a year before the production of *Mystery and Imagination*'s adaptation.



Fig. 1.24: Lascivious vamps



Fig. 1.25: Close-up of sexual excess

The flashback sequence as Harker recalls the events which ensued in the Count's castle is introduced by a long tracking shot of Dracula's stately hall, taking in all the usual trappings of Gothic architecture and mise-en-scène (heavily ornate archways and staircases, dripping candelabras, cobwebs, etc.). This is one of the two short sequences in the episode which is shot on film rather than video, and on location rather than in the studio, perhaps directly marking this moment as distinctly 'cinematic' and directly referencing the stock 'look' of Hammer horror in the 1960s. After the camera tracks with Harker around this space, a cut is made to his point-of-view, looking up in medium-long shot at a group of female vampires at the top of the dark staircase (see fig. 1.24). Although these figures, dressed in rags with blackened

the early sixties, *Thriller*, hosted by Boris Karloff.

teeth, are representative of the grotesque horror of the vampire, they are simultaneously sexualised, striking erotic poses and directing their clearly excessive sexual desire towards both Harker (and therefore, implicitly, the camera), and each other. As each shot of the vamps is drawn closer, both the horror of their gaping, blackened mouths and the extreme carnality of their lascivious tongues are brought into increasingly stark relief (see fig. 1.25), until Harker is stalked up the stairs by the female vampires. Indeed, the dramatic, sporadic score of this sequence representing Harker's simultaneously horrified and desiring memory (the melodramatic music of whining strings and music box chimes), is also in keeping with the sound design of Fisher's *Dracula* adaptations for Hammer.



Fig. 1.26: Possession as orgasmic rapture

The supernatural possession of Lucy (Susan George) by Count Dracula back in London (and back in the studio) is also represented by a performance of excessive sexual desire, in much the same way as the female vampires in Harker's memory/hallucination perform their threat through sexual display. As Lucy lies on her bed, struck down by the vampire, the camera tracks in to her writhing body, the performance of her possession resembling a state of orgasmic rapture (see fig. 1.26).

Throughout the drama, Lucy's interest in Dracula is represented as sexual, her desiring gaze on him often accompanied by the sound of tremulous violin strings, and thus this suggestion of desire is realised within the highly sexualised performance on her death-bed. After she has been bitten, in a series of shots also reminiscent of Hammer's excessive sexuality, Lucy's performance of orgasmic rapture is rendered through a series of extreme facial close-ups, with her desire literally filling the screen.

As with the female vampires in the memory sequence discussed above, a subtext of lesbian desire is also traced through the relationship between the dead or dying Lucy and her cousin, Mina (Suzanne Neve). It has been noted, by Molly Haskell (1987), Andrea Weiss (1993), Barbara Creed (1993), and others, that the horror films of the Hammer studio were particularly notorious for this convergence of excessive lesbian desire and vampirism, and thus we again see the cinematic influence within this episode of *Mystery and Imagination*. For example, a scene in the garden in which Mina meets Lucy after her death draws on the association made between lesbian eroticism and vampirism. This overt display of their desire for each other (close-ups of grabbing hands and ecstatic faces), was rather daring for a television drama which started prior to the 9 o'clock watershed (the episode ran from 8.30 p.m. to 10 p.m.), and it could in fact be argued that this subtext reflects a certain permissiveness in television scheduling in 1968. In light of this, it is clear that *Mystery and Imagination* not only put the supernatural on overt display (rather than hiding the monstrous figures behind suggestion and restraint), but also challenged television taboos around eroticism and homosexual desire, thus placing sexuality on display at the same time.

Whilst this discussion of Gothic television's relationship to Gothic theatre and horror cinema has focused on questions of performance and the risqué subject matter handled in *Mystery and Imagination*, a further examination of the series' visual style

finds evidence of the development of television-specific production technologies which were utilised in representing the supernatural, representations which rejected the suggestion and restraint of the alternative mode of Gothic television discussed at length in the beginning of this chapter. Just as digital production technologies would later be placed on display in American Gothic television of the 1990s (see the final chapter of this thesis), innovative video shooting and editing techniques were showcased in the Gothic anthology series of the 1960s and 70s in order to fully visualise the monstrous and the uncanny.



Fig. 1.27: Supernatural video effects



Fig. 1.28: Representing Dracula's death



Fig. 1.29: Representing Dracula's death

Whereas Denholm Elliott's performance as Dracula is substantially theatrical, when the vampire *is* portrayed as insubstantial in 'Dracula' (i.e. the moments in which he is supernaturally 'transported' through solid pieces of set, or materialises or decomposes mid-shot), the episode makes full use of, and in fact 'shows off', the possibilities of video production technology. The final scene of 'Dracula', in which the vampire is reduced to a pile of ashes, is a model of the way in which television-specific production techniques are utilised to excessively display the grotesque within the Gothic anthology series. After being struck down by the brandished crucifix of Van Helsing, (a moment in which the force of Dracula's loss of power is rendered through white flashes in the image produced by dramatically manipulating the contrast of the video tape (see fig. 1.27)), Dracula's degeneration is shown through a series of close-ups on his face and hands, during which Dracula/Elliott's face biodegrades on screen (an effect which seems to have been achieved by overlaying an image of melting ice onto the face of the vampire (see fig. 1.28)). Following this, the shot very slowly dissolves to an identical shot of a wax model of Dracula's head, slowly melting off its skull (see fig. 1.29); as the skull begins to degenerate and the flesh/wax melts off a skeletal hand, a cut is made between the horrific image and the horrified reaction shots of Van Helsing, Dr. Seward, Mina, and Jonathan, in a sequence which Peter Haining describes as 'a display of special effects unlike anything previously seen on television' (1993, 292). The combination of slowly dissolved images of the melting prosthetics (a low-budget rendition of the special effect) coupled with the extreme processing of the video image (switching to high contrast) which marks the move into the climactic sequence, can be seen as an overtly visual display of the supernatural/grotesque, with the cuts to the onlooking characters acting as a diegetic performance of the awe-struck viewer. Indeed, the fact that this ninety second sequence is shown without dialogue

privileges the visual representation of the Gothic in ways which exploit the possibilities of televisual display: here the 'supernatural' image is privileged over dialogue and exposition in no uncertain terms. Whilst the impact of this effect lies, to a very great extent, in it being seen in the context of other television dramas of the 1960s, it may be presumed that the shock of these images of the decomposing body of Dracula for a contemporary audience was pronounced²².



Fig. 1.30: Split screen effect

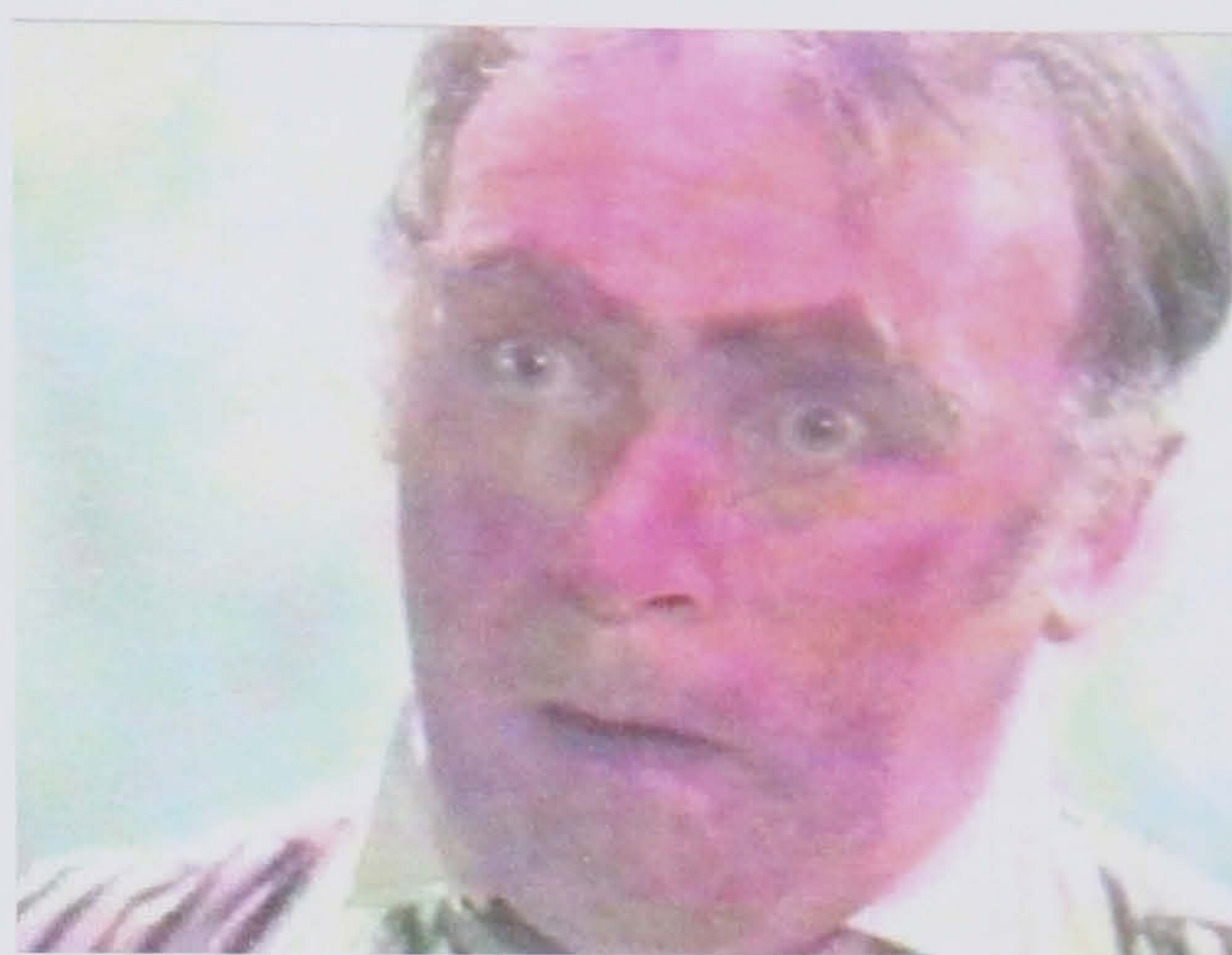


Fig 1.31: Image layering effect

In light of this example, the truly televisual Gothic drama of the 1960s and 70s would be that which ultimately places emphasis on the visual display of the supernatural, rather than the suggestive, restrained, more literary version of Gothic anthology television of this time (as discussed above). If, as John Thornton Caldwell argues in his study of televisuality, televisual television is self-consciously visual, exhibitionist, and excessive (1995), then by producing this kind of Gothic adaptation, the programme makers of *Mystery and Imagination* deliberately showcased the medium's aesthetic possibilities during a period of experimentation with production techniques, producing truly exhibitionist television drama which utilised a number of

²² Indeed, the effect was recently lampooned on Steve Coogan's series *Dr. Terrible's House of*

divergent and striking visual styles. There are several other examples of the showcasing of visual effects and video editing in *Mystery and Imagination*: the adaptation of 'Frankenstein' used split screen techniques to show Viktor Frankenstein and his monster (both played by Ian Holm) confronting one another in the same shot (see fig. 1.30), thereby using the special effect to fully display the uncanny image of the doppelgänger on screen, and the 1970 episode 'Sweeney Todd' (with Freddie Jones in the title role) showcased colour production techniques on television in representing Todd's moments of madness by overlaying a vividly red face over his own (see fig. 1.31). These moments of technical display within the Gothic anthology series all run contra to the adamantly stated decorum and restraint of the series which script editor Terence Feely was so keen to point to at the beginning of the series' broadcast. However, perhaps this ultimately highlights a paradox within Gothic television as discussed in this chapter; by moving towards a more visually excessive style, owing much to theatrical and cinematic traditions of Gothic representation, the anthology series also moved away from a narrative preoccupation with the domestic and domestic storytelling, a preoccupation which, it is argued elsewhere in this thesis, characterised much of Gothic fiction on television.

Mystery and Imagination is not alone in the history of the British Gothic anthology series in producing a 'television of attractions' which showcased video production technologies in its representation of the supernatural. In the 1970s the BBC produced its own 'excessive' anthology series, *Supernatural*, produced by Pieter Rogers, mainly written by Robert Muller, and featuring original Gothic teleplays about ghosts, werewolves, supernaturally animated dolls and marionettes, etc. *Supernatural*, like the ITV anthology series, utilised a number of filming and editing techniques to

Horrible in a parody that highlighted the rather primitive nature of this effect.

portray supernatural figures and uncanny events, showing off the possibilities of its (still relatively limited) modes of production. For example, in *Supernatural* shots were switched to negative or black and white to demarcate a supernatural presence, and images from several different shots were overlaid or juxtaposed in the same frame to suggest a feeling of uncanniness, or to morph character identities (e.g. a facial close-up of the eponymous character (played by Jeremy Brett) in the episode 'Mr. Nightingale' is overlaid on top of an image of a seagull to visually represent his ensuing madness). Also, in the same year, the BBC produced a prestigious adaptation of *Dracula* entitled *Count Dracula*, directed by Phillip Saville and starring Louis Jourdan in the title role, which, like *Supernatural*, also relied heavily on those special video effects first introduced in *Mystery and Imagination*.

However, even prior to *Supernatural*, the BBC had used the Gothic anthology series to showcase a development in the medium that was to expand the possibilities of television drama as a whole: the introduction of colour. In 1967, coinciding with the introduction of colour to BBC2 transmissions, the Corporation started a practical training experiment to familiarise its staff in the use of the new equipment for the service. As a result *Late Night Horror*, a six-part series which again focused on the literary adaptation (this time adapting short stories by Roald Dahl, Arthur Conan Doyle, and some lesser known horror writers) used the Gothic, and in particular the profusion of blood and gore required by Grand Guignol Gothic horror, to experiment with the possibilities of the medium, just as the phantasmagoria showmen of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had used images of supernatural beings to demonstrate the possibilities of their early projection equipment.

The producer of the series, Harry Moore, was very much aware that *Late Night Horror* was to be seen as a showcase for the colour 35mm film technology on

television, as was Gerald Savory (Head of Drama) who referred to the series as 'six experiments' (1967a) in a memo to the controller of BBC2 about the scheduling of *Late Night Horror*, outlining the need for the series to 'headline' the evening's drama output (it was eventually broadcast at 11.50 p.m. on Friday nights, a slot which perhaps reflects the fact that the experiment wasn't entirely successful). Moore himself sent out a memo delineating precisely what he wanted from the series to all of its directors, who had, prior to the beginning of production, been sent on a 'colour course' to learn the possibilities and limits of the new equipment. These directors, Rudolph Cartier²³, Naomi Capon²⁴, Paddy Russell²⁵, and Richard Martin²⁶, were told:

Late Night Horror will be the first drama series to be recorded in colour. We may not be the first to be transmitted, but all the more reason for us to do all we can to ensure that we create a standard which the other drama people have to follow... I would like to stress that we must do everything we can in our shows from the very beginning to stimulate suspense, tension, atmosphere, potential horror and HORROR! As I suggested before, use music, if there is blood, lets see the blood. If somebody is nasty, lets make them "real nasty"... We're in the horror business and this series will stand or fall on the enthusiasm and delight we show in our approach to it. So blood, guts, thunder, lightning, eyeballs, dark corners, cobwebs, close-ups, faces, faces, faces, and above all EXCITEMENT! (Moore, 1967c)

²³ Who had produced and directed the groundbreaking horror/sci-fi crossover *Quatermass* serials (BBC, 1953; 1955), as well as directing an episode for the BBC's fantasy-horror series *Out of the Unknown* (1965-7).

²⁴ Also worked on *Out of the Unknown* as well as directing 'The House' for the *Wednesday Thriller*.

²⁵ Also worked on *Out of the Unknown* as well as directing several episodes of *Dr Who* (1963-89) in 1966.

²⁶ Who had also previously directed episodes of *Dr Who* in 1964 and 1965.

The sense of innovation and experimentation in Moore's instruction is very clearly coupled with the explicit portrayal of gory horror in *Late Night Horror*. The producer emphasises here both the need to display the possibilities of the new technology and the need to display blood and gore in close-up. An example from the series, such as the removal of Diane Cilento's lower lip in 'The Kiss of Blood', is telling of just how graphic these six 'experiments' were, although the gimmicky nature of the series was not easily missed in the press. A report on the above episode from the *Sunday Telegraph* states '*Late Night Horror* culminated in another easily bought thrill, the particularly revolting mutilation of Diane Cilento... The reaction was a very loud ugh, but... you felt the story existed only to make its effects, and when these were expended the whole thing shrivelled away' (Anon. 1968a, 35).

Although the series strove for technical innovation and the showcasing of new technology, the production teams working on *Late Night Horror* were disappointed by the limitations of the new equipment, which was heavy and difficult to manoeuvre, and worried that the majority of the audience still watching in black and white would find the camera work dated and unimaginative. On this subject, producer Harry Moore wrote the following:

[i]f we want to sell the excitement of colour we're not going to do it by restricting our shooting capacity. We have a good standard now, but as most viewers will be watching in black and white we'll be giving them "old hat" production standards. They are not going to be excited about having a colour television if it doesn't look as good as the old black and white. (Moore, 1967b)

Gerald Savory also added to this in his report on the filming of *Late Night Horror*:

[it] is proving exceedingly slow with the result that only the most primitive camera techniques can be employed. The most serious result of this can be seen in the inadequacy of the lighting... Unfortunately it is really very far below the standard we expect. (Savory, 1967b)

It appears that in privileging the representation of blood in colour above all else, other production values in this series suffered. Writing of this moment in television history, Andrew Crisell states,

The obvious effect of colour was to make the medium of television immensely more vivid and picturesque: costume dramas and natural history programmes were only two of its more obvious beneficiaries. But there were also negative implications. Those who worried about effects and influences of television were not slow to point out that in its representation of violence... the blood would now run red. (1997, 116)

As a self-confessed horror programme, *Late Night Horror* embodied the morally negative effects of colour television as expressed by Crisell, whilst at the same time showcasing new production technologies.

Narratively, *Late Night Horror* was in fact closer to later Gothic anthology series on British television than it was to series such as *Mystery and Imagination* and those episodes of *Ghost Story for Christmas* discussed above, with their emphasis on literary horrors set in the past. Whilst these series featured ghosts and monsters dislocated into another time and place, *Late Night Horror*'s episodes, like those of the Amicus studios in contemporaneous British cinema (see Hutchings, 2002), concentrated on the contemporary domestic setting and perhaps represent a more mimetic tradition within the British Gothic television. Later series such as *Haunted*, *Journey to the Unknown*, *Dead of Night*, *Hammer House of Horror*, *Chiller*, *Ghosts*,

and *Urban Gothic* all situate themselves within this 'mimetic tradition', featuring narratives which emphasise the everydayness of television horror. In these series, hauntings, possessions and the presence of monstrosity are most often contained within the domestic locale, explicitly playing on contemporary fears around the home and family. Whilst space in this thesis does not allow for a fuller discussion or description of these anthology series, due to the fact that this chapter has concentrated on providing a classification and analysis of the two divergent Gothic aesthetics on British television in the 1960s and 70s, it might be argued that these later anthology series played upon a certain 'closeness' between the dramatic space and the viewing space which will be discussed later in this thesis in relation to the female Gothic adaptation. In turn, this sense of closeness and Gothic television's emphasis on the congruence of the familiar and the unknown, leads towards the following analysis of Lars von Trier's Gothic hospital drama, *Riget (The Kingdom)*, which considers the ways in which the uncanny, a key element of the Gothic genre, is presented in this text.

Riget (The Kingdom): Art Television and the Uncanny

The following analysis of the Gothic hospital drama series *Riget* moves away from a more general history of Gothic television (as offered in relation to the British anthology series in the second chapter of this thesis), to focus on a single serial drama, made for Danish television and broadcast by the BBC in the UK in 1996 after its theatrical release in this country earlier in the same year. *Riget* will be approached in this chapter as an unusual example of 'art television' which was simultaneously viewed as a cinematic object both by distributors and reviewers, particularly due to the status of its creator as one of Denmark's most celebrated film directors. As such, this analysis explores the tension between the serial's theatrical distribution and its identity as a piece of medium-specific Gothic drama, arguing that ultimately *Riget* must be read and understood as a piece of television produced for a domestic reception context. In addition, this chapter will also focus on the ways in which both narrative and formal elements of *Riget* exploit the uncanny, one of the central concepts of Gothic fiction and a key concept in understanding the particular nature of Gothic drama made to be viewed in the home. It will be argued that the conjunction of the familiar and the supernatural in this hospital drama serial renders the Gothic narrative uncanny within the specific contexts of television broadcast. Necessarily, the opening section of this chapter will offer a certain amount of expository detail about the Danish broadcasting industry, as well as offering some broader contextual information about the production of *Riget*. A second series of *Riget* (*Riget II/The Kingdom II*), was broadcast in the UK in July and August 2001 but, whilst reference will be made to the second series, this analysis will primarily focus on the original serial of *Riget*. This focus on the first part of the serial is not only based on the need to apply some

limitations to the object of study; the second series, a continuation of the narrative strands established in the first part of the serial drama, moves away from the uncanny and further towards the horror genre, with fuller visualisations of demons, ghosts and the supernatural.

Riget is a five-part mini-series detailing the supernatural happenings which take place in a large hospital (also known as Riget (The Kingdom)) in Copenhagen. It follows the stories of a variety of figures in the hospital whose lives (and hauntings) are interwoven in a complex, episodic narrative: Dr. Stig Helmer (Ernst Hugo Järogård), a cantankerous Swedish neurosurgeon who can't stand the Danes, attempts to cover-up a bungled brain operation on a young girl named Mona (Laura Christensen), and escape the advances of his girlfriend, Rigger (Ghita Nørby), whilst becoming involved in 'The Brothers of Riget', a secret masonic-style society operating in the hospital, and who eventually escapes to Haiti at the end of the first series to discover the secrets of Voodoo; Mrs Drusse (Kirsten Rolfes), an elderly perpetual malingerer and spiritualist, has herself repeatedly committed to the hospital in order to uncover the secrets of a ghost girl, Mary (Annevig Schelde Ebbe), who haunts the hospital after being murdered there by her father, a prominent experimental doctor named Åge Kruger (Udo Kier), in 1919; Junior Registrar Krogen Hook (Søren Pilmark), who lives in the basement of the hospital and runs its black market, falls in love with another Registrar, Judith (Birgitte Raabjerg) who has become impregnated with the deformed, oversized child of Kruger's demonic ghost, and thus Krogen collaborates with Mrs Drusse in her attempt to rid the hospital of its ghosts, whilst also trying to uncover the truth behind Helmer's bungled operation; medical student Mogge (Peter Mygind), the son of the hospital's ineffectual administrator, Dr. Moesgaard (Holger Juul Hansen), is spurned by Nurse Camilla (Solbjørg Højfeldt) and

reacts by leaving her the severed head of a corpse from the mortuary (which subsequently goes missing), and then enrolling in the sleep research centre where she works, to have dreams which are both horrific and pornographic; Professor Bondo (Baard Ove) has the diseased liver of a dead patient illegally transplanted into his own body by the 'Brothers of The Kingdom' so that he may continue his research into hepatomas. This brief outline of the main narrative strands of *Riget* will give some idea of both the complexity of the serial narrative and the absurd black humour of the series.

Contextualising *Riget*: Danish television, art television and Lars von Trier

Danish television has an organisational structure not dissimilar to broadcasting in the United Kingdom, albeit that a non-commercial state monopoly existed for far longer in Denmark. From 1953 until 1988 a single channel, Danmarks Radio, was broadcast, funded by a public license fee and founded on the principles of public service broadcasting akin to the Reithian values of the BBC briefly discussed at the beginning of the preceding chapter. In October 1988 a second channel, TV2, came into being as a non-profit making channel taking 70% of its revenue from advertising and 30% from license fees. This channel also has public service obligations, and, similarly to ITV in the UK, is structured around eight regional franchises. The decision to sanction a second channel was taken to increase viewer choice in Denmark without succumbing to the ever-burgeoning presence of commercial cable television (a resistance that did not last for long: by 1994, 65% of Danish households were equipped for cable and satellite). As Vibeke Petersen notes, 'This rather expensive structure does not follow a commercial logic, but a media-political one. It reflects a wish to counter competition

for viewers from foreign television and to give them a choice among Danish channels rather than to introduce commercial television.’ (1992, 623). To summarise the distinction between the two channels, Petersen and Sivne explain:

DR is an independent public institution, responsible for broadcasting radio and television programmes (news, information, entertainment, and art) to the whole population. Quality, diversity and plurality are the main objectives. Fairness and impartiality are mentioned as objectives in relation to the transmission of information. TV2 is labelled an independent institution, while the word public is absent. Programme responsibilities are described in much the same way as for DR, with an emphasis on quality, diversity and plurality. The purpose of TV2 is to produce news and current affairs, while all other programmes are to be bought from independent producers. (1997, 41)

This expansion of public television in Denmark continued in 1990 with the advent of TV3, a more populist channel founded by a Swedish company that made the move into Danish broadcasting.

It is evident that the industrial structures in place in Denmark are similar to that of the early years of British broadcasting. There is a clear emphasis on producing ‘quality’ television in the remits of both Danmarks Radio and TV2, and DR in particular seeks to serve the purpose of bringing both television ‘entertainment’ and ‘art’ to the Danish viewer, particularly through quality television drama which is produced domestically: ‘DR prides itself on the focus it gives to Danish programmes and Danish fiction’ (Agger & Nielsen 2000, 120). It is therefore unsurprising that the dramatic output of Danish television has been characterised by a sense of both quality

and cultural diversity. Describing the ‘European tradition of encouraging and developing a diversity of cultural output’, Richard Paterson notes the following:

taking Denmark, for instance, as an example of European public broadcasting, in broad terms the move had been from classical plays in the 1950s to modern experimental plays in the 1960s, TV movies in the 1970s , with a return to nostalgia in the 1980s. (1995, 101)

In addition, Paterson also goes on to comment on the popularity and success of the serial drama in Denmark. Therefore, as was argued in the previous chapter in relation to British television during the early years of competition in the UK, certain patterns of experimentation and ‘quality’ in the production of drama can be related to the public service ethos in Denmark.

Lars von Trier’s Gothic hospital drama, *Riget*, co-produced by the director’s own production company, Zentropa, and Danmarks Radio, both played on the popularity of the serial form on Danish television, and also marks a return to the production of experimental television drama. Going into production at a vital point of competition in the history of Danish broadcasting (particularly in relation to the ever burgeoning presence of cable television in Denmark), *Riget* relied on its distinctive ‘art’ aesthetic and on the cultural kudos of its director/production company, to differentiate the dramatic output of an ailing television station (Danmarks Radio) from that of its commercial counterparts (TV2, TV3, and cable/satellite stations). The director of the drama unit, Ole Bornedal¹, commissioned *Riget* at a time of financial hardship, and under the leadership of its new director general, Christian S. Nissen, who had previously run both the National Gallery and, ironically, the hospital featured in von Trier’s mini-series, into the ground. It is apparent then that the circumstances

under which the serial was produced impacted somewhat on its narrative: the irony of *Riget*'s depiction of a well-established institution on the verge of a spectacular collapse under the direction of an ineffectual manager may well have resonated with a Danish audience. The shaky hand-held camerawork, the ruptures and eruptions of the hospital building, the fine line trodden between the serious hospital drama and the hysterical ghost story, all speak of a state of extra-diegetic unease within the television industry as much as they mark out a return of the repressed within the drama itself. Helmer's role as the rational Swede underlines the bathos of this representation, in that his reactions to the unorthodox methods employed in the hospital (e.g. brain operations done under hypnosis rather than anaesthetic; the ridiculous 'Operation Morning Air' initiative²) serve as a critical diegetic commentary on the failing institution.

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, *Riget* is an unusual piece of television. It can be defined as 'art television' in that it moves away from the temporal and spatial verisimilitude of more orthodox hospital dramas, particularly those produced in North America (one of the main sources of potential cultural colonisation feared by the Danish television industry in the 1990s), towards a more experimental aesthetic. In *Riget*, the naturalism of these hospital dramas is eschewed in favour of a variety of unorthodox formal devices which adhere to both an objective and subjective realist aesthetic, as well as employing expressive techniques more readily associated with the televisual Gothic dramas of the 1960s and 70s (as discussed in the previous

¹ Bornedal had just directed *Nattevagten* (*Nightwatch*) (Denmark, 1994) for the cinema, a horror-hospital drama crossover (and therefore a source of reference for *Riget*), which was heralded as a triumph for Danish cinema and as somewhat of a renaissance for an ailing national industry.

² A management initiative established for the promotion of 'transparency' in the hospital to establish further communication and goodwill between staff and patients, mainly implemented by the circulation of 'Operation Morning Air' stickers and morning meetings in which staff are encouraged to sing and discuss their feelings.

chapter of this thesis)³. The presence of von Trier as an art-auteur/creator is also unusual for a hospital drama, and thus *Riget*'s director, who is very much associated with Danish art cinema rather than television production, also marks this serial as 'art television'⁴.

Von Trier, who had previously produced a one-off experimental television drama for Danmarks Radio (an adaptation of Euripides' *Medea* in 1987, from a script written by Carl Theodor Dreyer and Preben Thomsen in the mid-sixties), was originally approached by the company to produce another short television drama, but negotiated with DR's drama department the possibility of producing a longer serial drama which would allow him to create a more unusually medium-specific work (the serial form distinguishing the project from his filmmaking). This commission, clearly an attempt to monopolise on the director's international acclaim as an artist, was a wise move from Danmarks Radio at a time of intensifying competition in Danish broadcasting; by association, von Trier offered the station's drama department a certain cultural kudos within Denmark, as well as presenting a prime opportunity for international export at a time when the burgeoning influx of imported television (particularly from the US) was causing concern for Danish television stations⁵.

Some critical work has been undertaken on the notion of 'art television', most notably in John Caughie's 1982 article 'Rhetoric, Pleasure and Art Television – *Dreams of Leaving*', which offers an extended discussion of a 1980 BBC *Play for Today*, 'Dreams of Leaving', written and directed by David Hare, and later in his

³ Von Trier has in fact acknowledged that *Riget* is greatly influenced by a specific piece of 1960s television, namely the French Gothic serial drama *Belphégor: le fantôme du Louvre*. (ORTF/SN Pathé Cinéma, 1965).

⁴ Von Trier was known at the time of *Riget*'s production for such films as *Europa* (Denmark, 1991), *Epidemic* (Denmark, 1988), and *Forbrydelsens element* (*The Element of Crime*) (Denmark, 1984).

⁵ For example, in 2000 it was reported by Gunhild Agger and Alexander P. Nielsen that '[m]ore than half of all fiction on television is American, and just under half of the average viewer's consumption is American fiction' (2000, 123).

reassessment of this piece in *Television Drama: Realism, Modernism and British Culture* (2000). In the earlier article, Caughie attempts to theorise 'art television' by centralising the position of the television auteur, focusing on the creative control which Hare had over the production of 'Dreams of Leaving':

Hare writes and directs his own films [sic], thus giving himself a more continuous control over the process, and breaking down the division between professional expert [the director and producer of television drama] and artist [the writer]. Given this control, Hare, as a filmmaker, produces a deliberate and relatively elaborate mise-en-scène... At the formal level, [Hare's dramas] have a visual interest and consistency which is unusual in British television... Hare can be compare to those cinematic auteurs whose work was celebrated by *Cahiers*. (1982, 15)

This discussion of Hare's position as an art-auteur on television could quite easily be applied to von Trier's position in the production of *Riget*, and in Caughie's view, vindicates the fact that Hare's work, such as 'Dreams of Leaving', stands out within what he describes as the 'hierarchy' of television 'flow' (1982, 31). As such, Caughie positions art-television as 'special television', a notion that conforms to the use of von Trier's prestige as a point of differentiation within a moment of intensified competition in the Danish television industry. However, in the later revision of this analysis, Caughie also notes that difference and originality are soon absorbed into the repetitive flow of the broadcast medium, a fact which means that art, creativity, or the avant-garde on television becomes normalised or accepted within this reception context: offering an example, he suggests that, '[a]fter a few episodes, the bizarre is routine in *Twin Peaks*' (2000, 130). This 'normalisation' of an art aesthetic can however be questioned in relation to *Riget*, which was so successfully marketed by

Danmarks Radio and Zentropa as ‘event television’ on the basis of its formal experimentation, and which received such a high level of critical praise, that the serial drama was taken out of its television context and given a theatrical release, a phenomenon discussed below. Therefore, rather than being incorporated into the flow of broadcast television, *Riget* continued to be differentiated by its art aesthetic to such an extent that it became an autonomous text with a theatrical or public identity, as well as being identified as a piece of ‘stand out’ domestic drama.

The assignation of the ‘author’ title has historically been problematic within television studies, as Robert C. Allen notes;

because of the technological complexity of the medium and as a result of the application to most commercial television production of the principals of modern industrial organisation (including mass production and detailed division of labour), it is very difficult to locate the “author” of a television program – if by that we mean the single individual who provides the unifying vision behind the programme. (1992b, 9)

Whilst Allen’s comments might equally be applied to the nomination of authorship within the film industry, they do summarise one of the most oft-cited problems with television authorship: that the production of television is seen as an *industrial*, rather than *artistic*, practice. However, with *Riget* this difficulty was somewhat effaced: Lars von Trier was presented precisely as the ‘single individual who provides the unifying vision behind the programme’ (which could more correctly be defined as the ‘creator’ in television production terms, as with David Lynch in *Twin Peaks*), even though the script was co-conceived and written with Niels Vørsel and Tómas Gislason, and, according to von Trier, the actors had more creative, improvisational input than in any of his previous work. Ed Buscombe has explored the notion of the *creator* in

television, drawing out the complexities of this and associated terms in relation to the industrial organisation of the medium. However, whilst Buscombe finds ‘creator’ to be a more satisfactory label than ‘author’ in relation to television, he continues to uphold the problematic nature of the term; as Buscombe argues, by accepting the description of creator, ‘creative workers in television run the risk of complicity with an institution which ghettoises their work into the realm of the merely personal, thus undercutting its authority’ (1980, 17), thus furthering a lack of recognition and space for creativity within the rest of television’s production.

With reference to Buscombe’s argument, the assignation of the ‘creator’ label to Lars von Trier in relation to his television work could be seen as a divisive move on the part of the television company in order to exploit his status as an art ‘auteur’; indeed, as a recognisable ‘creator’, von Trier was the focus of much of the reviews which accompanied *Riget*. For instance, Mark le Fanu, in *Positif*, heralded von Trier as a ‘génie’⁶ with ‘un don merveilleux’⁷ and elevated the serial as a ‘beau portrait psychologique – de bon goût, fin et amusant, sans cabotinage ni excès’⁸ (1995, 114), whilst other reviewers depicted the director as a kind of ‘mad genius’ or ‘enfant terrible’ (Hoberman 1995, 45), suggesting precisely the ‘ghettoisation’ of creativity on television which Buscombe’s article outlines. The very first frame of the serial marks authorship or creator-ship through the title ‘Lars von Trier presents’, and the director’s appearance, in a Hitchcock-esque summation at the end of each of the five episodes strengthens this depiction of the director as the controlling, artistic vision behind the serial. As well as highlighting the almost banal familiarity of the hospital drama on television (this aspect will be discussed below), von Trier’s tongue-in-cheek concluding remarks often draw attention to the unusual ‘artiness’ of the serial, albeit

⁶ ‘genius’

by mocking his own position as an auteur-creator of art television/cinema; for example, at the end of the second episode, von Trier, dressed in a tuxedo and holding a glass of champagne to the camera, states ‘I’m very happy with part two. I’d call it poetic and captivating’⁹. This self-conscious acknowledgement of the mini-series’ ‘poetry’ speaks much of the supposed incongruity between television and art.

This artistic self-consciousness is also textually inscribed at the beginning of the series (and subsequently at the beginning of each episode as the opening sequence is repeated). The opening of *Riget*, a slow-motion sequence shot on high resolution film, couples images from the bleaching pools (which existed on the site of the hospital before it was built) with a voice-over, and marks out the ‘stylishness’ of the series, immediately delineating its visual and aural distinction from the rest of television’s broadcast flow. This sequence is reminiscent in tone of the opening voice-over of von Trier’s earlier film, *Europa*, in which the narrator takes on the identity of a hypnotist drawing the audience into the diegesis through a soporific direct address. The almost caricatured representation of the director’s hypnotic control over the audience, an attempt to draw in the viewer and enthrall them, can be seen as all the more crucial on television as a ‘recruiter’ medium (i.e. a medium on which channels consciously seeks to ‘recruit’ viewers from the general flow of the broadcast text), and thus this opening voice-over can be seen as a metaphor for the draw of the singular style or voice of Lars von Trier as the art-auteur-creator on television.

In producing *Riget* for television, von Trier attempted to challenge himself as a director by creating what he has entitled a ‘left handed work’, a text which is made strange and ambitious by the unfamiliarity of the medium for which it is being

⁷ ‘a marvellous gift’

⁸ ‘a great psychological portrait – tasteful, amusing, without pretension or excess’

⁹ Please note that all the translations of dialogue from *Riget* are by Jonathan Sydenham, taken from the subtitles of the international broadcast/distribution copy of *Riget*.

produced. In the publicity material assembled to accompany the serial's international theatrical debut at the Venice Film Festival, von Trier explains this definition by comparing *Riget* to David Lynch's *Twin Peaks*:

Twin Peaks must have been to Mr. Lynch what I call a left-hand work.

And with left-hand I mean that in the very positive sense of the phrase.

So I thought to myself that is what you have to do, you have to find

something that is not so dear to you because when you work with

something that it not so dear then you feel completely free... After a

lifetime of using your right hand let's assume that you, on a sudden burst

of inspiration and only for the purpose of recreation, try out the left.

(Zentropa Entertainments and Danmarks Radio, 1994)

This notion of a 'left handed work', as both less serious and, at the same time, innovative and creative, describes very well the position of *Riget* within von Trier's oeuvre. The freedom of its performance style and production processes are indicative of the freedom that the director felt in working within a new medium: during the production of *Riget* the actors were encouraged to improvise by the director, in a way which would be developed further for von Trier's later films *Breaking the Waves* (Denmark/Sweden/France/Netherlands/Norway, 1996), *The Idiots (Idioterne)* (Denmark, 1998) and *Dancer in the Dark* (Denmark/Sweden, 2000), and in the pre-production period of this television serial, von Trier employed less meticulous storyboarding than he had used with his previous films, therefore placing a greater emphasis on post-production editing from a larger amount of footage.

Riget is also unusual in that it occupies a kind of dual existence as both television *and* film; undoubtedly, it was von Trier's status within the art film industry which led to the exhibition and distribution of the serial theatrically, as well as leading

to the large number of countries in which it was shown in its serial form on television¹⁰.

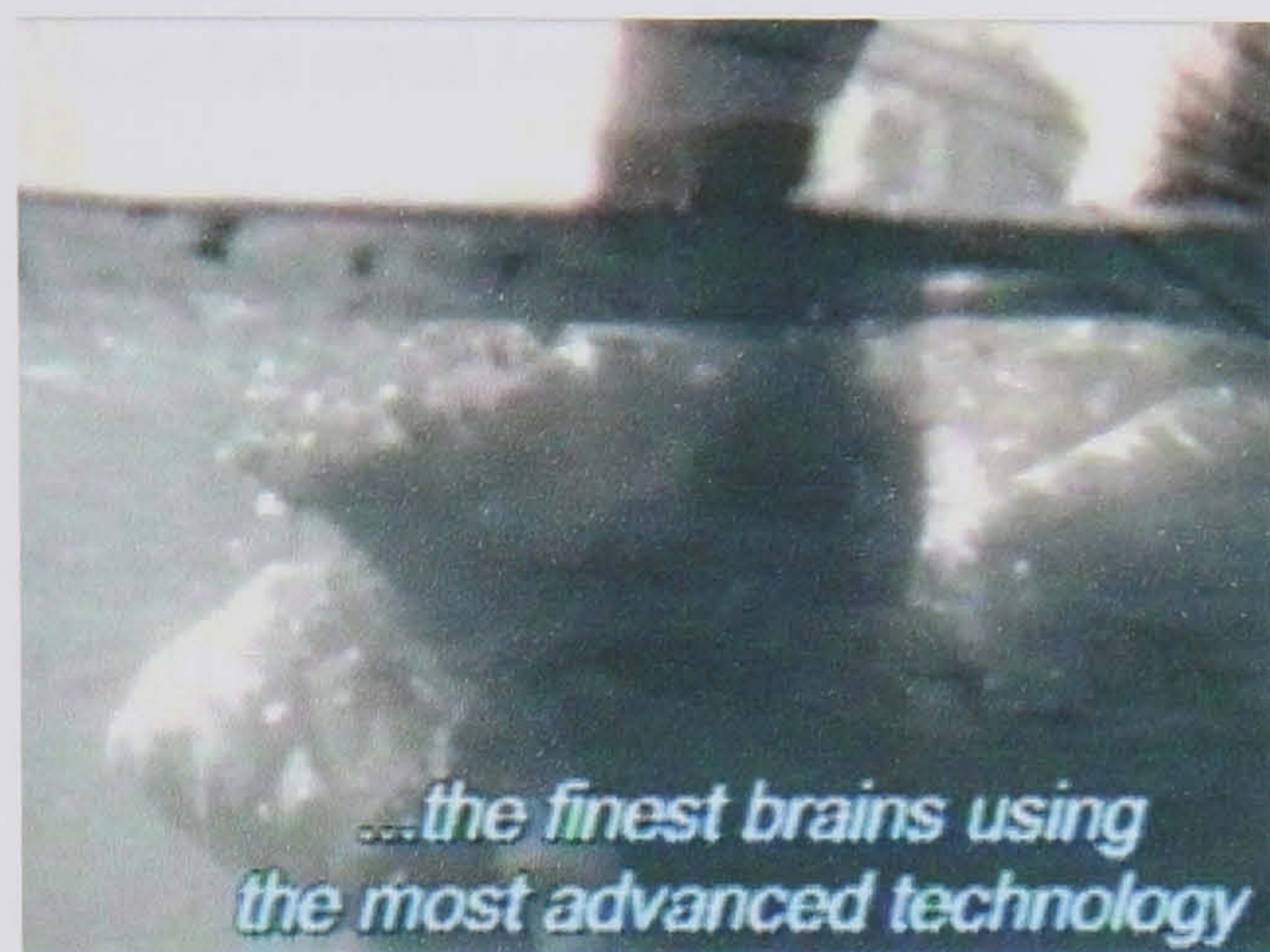


Fig. 2.1: Underwater tracking shot

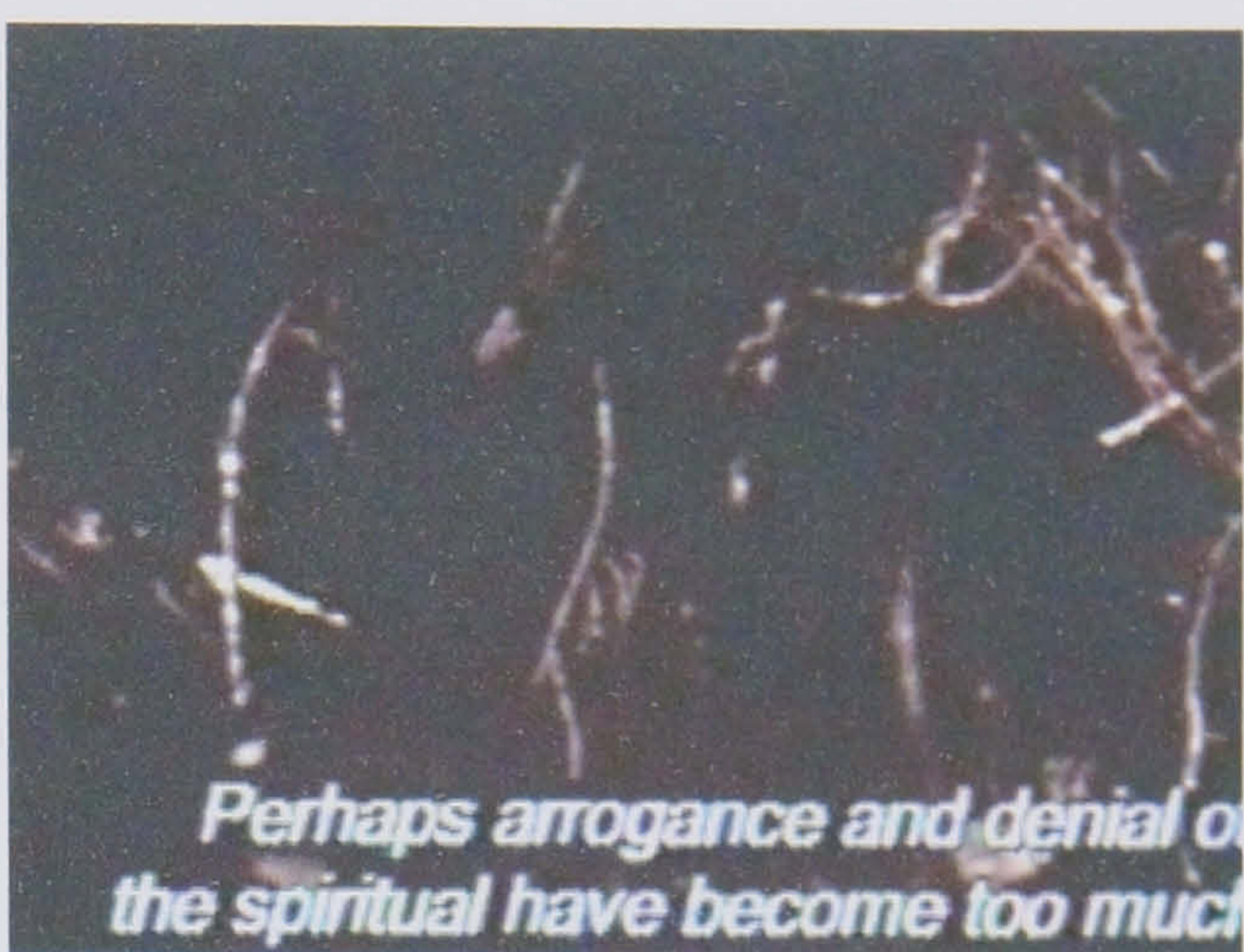


Fig. 2.2: Underground tracking shot

However, this dual identity is also exposed textually, in that certain shots, such as the extended underwater/underground tracking shot in the opening sequence (see figs. 2.1 & 2.2), where the camera travels into the subterranean space below the hospital, simultaneously taking on cinematic and television-specific identity. This shot references television form in that it is reminiscent of the filming techniques of technically accomplished nature programmes whereby the television viewer is shown the inner workings of the natural world through a series of almost supernatural tracking shots such as this. However, it is also simultaneously cinematic in that it demonstrates a sophistication of production more frequently seen in the cinema, akin to that of, for example, von Trier’s extended underwater tracking shot at the end of *Europa*. In fact, John Thornton Caldwell might identify the sequence’s ‘cinematic-ness’ as televisual in itself, in that he argues that the cinematic style is a key aesthetic strategy within the production of televisual television, suggesting that ‘[cinematic

¹⁰ For example, Denmark, Sweden, France, US, UK, Finland, and Poland.

television] inevitably drew critical attention by [its] very programming presence and cinematic air of distinction' (1995, 12) (as discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis). To some extent then, it is difficult to separate the two identities of *Riget*; at the outset the serial *looks* both cinematic and like television, a dual identity which was subsequently reflected in the way in which the serial was broadcast/distributed.

The theatrical distribution of *Riget* also suggests that television which is elevated to the status of 'art' *becomes* cinema, and the critical discussion surrounding the theatrical release of the serial would certainly seem to support this statement. For example, J. Hoberman, in New York's *Village Voice*, commented on this phenomenon on *Riget*'s theatrical release in the US: 'Some of the best television in New York is projected these days on movie screens, the timidity of American TV creating opportunities for the city's alternative venues' (1998, 45). The reviewer therefore cites the inability of the medium for which *Riget* was made to contain a 'quality' object, particularly in the US, as being the reason for its theatrical release¹¹. This would certainly be in keeping with John Caughie's view of 'art television' which aligns the authored art production on television with cinematic versions of the art film, and which proposes that art television stands out of the hierarchy of television's flow (1980, 15). However, at the time of *Riget*'s theatrical release in France, Mark le Fanu in *Positif* went even further in reading the serial's cinematic identity as *proof* of its status as 'art'. He claimed that the theatrical release of *Riget* overrode its medium specific identity as a piece of television (even though television was precisely what Lars von Trier had challenged himself and his production team to make) claiming, '[*Riget*] trouve, sur grand écran et dans la continuité de sa durée, la respiration qui est

¹¹ The theatrical exhibition of *Riget* is not exceptional in the United States. For example, the BBC's six-part Dennis-Potter scripted thriller, *The Singing Detective* (BBC, 1985-86) was also screened in a small number of cinema venues.

la sienne'¹² (1995, 114). Indeed, in this article Le Fanu continues to ignore the specificity of the series' episodic seriality, even whilst praising *Riget*'s narrative structure: 'Dans un film de plus de quatre heures, la capacité de concentration du spectateur devait être prise en considération. A cet égard, il faut évoquer la structure du film qui n'est rien moins que superbe'¹³ (ibid., 116). It is clear then that the valorisation of the artistic television text, in the eyes of certain critics and in certain national contexts, comes at the expense of the eradication of its medium specificity. Le Fanu cites other work, such as *Heimat – Eine deutsche Chronik* (Edgar Reitz Film/Sender Freies Berlin/Westdeutscher Rundfunk, 1984) and *Shoah* (French Ministry of Culture and Communication/Historia/Les Films Aleph, 1985) as also being texts made for television which 'surpassed' their intended medium to 'benefit' from a theatrical release. Ultimately, Le Fanu claims that *Riget* is potentially more 'effective' as drama when shown in cinemas: 'Car, en fin de compte, il n'y a pas de doute que [*Riget*] fonctionne *mieux* au cinéma. Sa force, sa lisibilité, sa beauté s'en trouvent accrues... le film a conservé la grandeur et l'intensité – la «monumentalité» - propres au grand écran et aux salles obscures'¹⁴ (ibid., 117). It is therefore evident that the reviewer cannot read *Riget* as a work of quality without insisting upon its 'true' identity as cinema, drawing precisely on the points of difference between the theatrical and domestic space (large screens, darkened rooms) to contextualise the 'ideal' reception context of *Riget*. In doing so, Le Fanu rejects the possibility of a television auteur or creativity on television, which, as is argued above, von Trier and *Riget* precisely represent. Furthermore, this reviewer and others also failed to identify the

¹² ' [*Riget*] finds its breath on the big screen and in the continuity which comes with duration'.

¹³ 'In a film of more than four hours, the spectator's attention span has to be taken into consideration. In this respect, we must bring up the film's structure, which is nothing less than superb.'

¹⁴ 'There is no doubt that [*Riget*] works *best* at the cinema. Its power, its legibility, its beauty are thereby increased... the film has preserved its grandeur and intensity – its 'monumentality' - peculiar to the big screen and dark theatres.'

importance of *Riget*'s serial form, its self-referentiality as a piece of television drama. and the generic identities specific to forms of television drama which the following section of this chapter will address.

Uncanny medium/uncanny form

If, as has been suggested above, *Riget* was von Trier's attempt to create a fresh new work devised specifically for a particular medium, then an analysis of the serial must firstly take into account the specificity of its identity as television. As is argued elsewhere in this thesis, notions of familiarity and recognition become paramount when considering the specific nature of Gothic fictions presented within the domestic reception context. As such, it may be politic here to turn to that specific element of Gothic fiction which appears to be so imbedded into the familiar and the notion of recognition: the uncanny.

In the opening section of his 1919 essay on 'The Uncanny', Sigmund Freud offers a lengthy discussion of the origins and definitions of the words 'heimlich' (literally 'familiar' or 'homely') and 'unheimlich' (literally 'uncanny' or 'un-homely') and concludes that the two terms are not in fact mutually exclusive, but rather inextricably linked: 'heimlich is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, unheimlich. Unheimlich is in some way or other a sub-species of heimlich' (Freud 1990, 347). This linguistic genealogy, which demonstrates the very closeness of the two words, thus shows that the uncanny cannot come into existence without the presence of the familiar. Throughout this essay, Freud develops what Terry Castle has described as a 'theme-index' (1995, 4) of the uncanny.

an obsessional inventory of eerie fantasies, motifs, and effects. an itemised tropology of the weird. Doubles, dancing dolls and automata. waxwork figures, alter egos and “mirror” selves, spectral emanations, detached body parts (“a severed head, a hand out of the wrist, feet that dance by themselves”), the ghastly fantasy of being buried alive. omens, precognitions, déjà vu... What makes them uncanny is precisely the way they subvert the distinction between the real and the phantasmic. (ibid., 4-5)

In this categorisation of Freud’s notion of what the uncanny constitutes, the blurred distinction between the ‘real and the phantasmic’, as Castle sees it, might also be read as the dissolution of boundaries between the familiar and the strange, or the everyday and the disturbing.

It should be noted here that this analysis of the uncanny within the Gothic television drama deals explicitly with the Freudian notion of the term’s meaning. Just as definitions of the Gothic have been inexact or contradictory (as discussed in chapter one of this thesis), so do definitions of the uncanny remain equally difficult to standardise. For example, Tzvetan Todorov’s structuralist approach to the fantastic as a literary genre refers to the uncanny as the ‘supernatural explained’ and describes the uncanny as ‘works [in which]... events are related which may be readily accounted for by the laws of reason, but which are, in one way or another, incredible, extraordinary, shocking, singular, disturbing or unexpected’ (1975, 46), a definition which betrays the fact that, as Todorov admits, ‘there is not entire coincidence between Freud’s use of the term and [his] own’ (ibid. 47). Indeed, in the eyes of Todorov, *Riget* would more accurately described as a drama of the *marvellous*, in that the existence of ghosts and spirits is fully accepted within the real world of the serial throughout (particularly

by Madame Drusse and her cronies, and later by nearly all of the hospital staff in one form or another). However, for the purpose of this analysis the Freudian delineation of the term ‘uncanny’ will be applied throughout.

Von Trier’s monologue at the end of the final episode of *Riget* directly refers to the tension between the familiarity of television as a medium (as an ‘everyday’ medium which exists within the homes of the viewers) and the supernatural drama, and therefore directly addresses the ways in which the sensation of the uncanny is produced within the domestic viewing context. He describes the frisson that is created when the uncanny is presented within the confines of the familiar when he declares the following:

[m]aybe what we’ve shown has troubled you. Don’t be afraid, keep your eyes and ears open. All we can do is try to scare you with stage blood. Only when you avert your eyes have we got you. The real horror begins behind closed doors.

In fact, von Trier begins this monologue by pantomiming the act of a child watching scary television, hiding his eyes behind his hands. The slippage here between closed eyes and closed doors refers to the horror of the Gothic/uncanny being contained within a familiar space (whether that be bodily or domestic space); according to von Trier, when this ‘unheimlich’ presence is felt within the ‘heimlich’ space the horror of the uncanny becomes all the more real. This monologue thus dramatises the representation of the uncanny on television within the domestic viewing context.

Gunhild Agger and Alexander P. Nielsen have argued that generic hybridity is a particular trait of Danish television as it strives to find a nationally-specific identity for its television drama whilst remaining competitive:

national production also involves relations with foreign production industries and the traditions. It involves the constant recirculation of domestic as well as foreign TV fiction on all the channels: hence the impurity and hybridity [of Danish television drama]. (2000, 117)

Furthermore, they identify *Riget* as the prime example of the ‘impurity and hybridity’ of Danish television drama: ‘*Riget* represents a shrewd combination of avant-garde and popular appeal, of American and Danish genre traditions, of universal themes in a domestic setting’ (ibid., 118). However, rather than simply reading this generic hybridity in *Riget* as a product of Danish television’s desire to create nationally-specific dramas whilst also ‘recirculating’ international forms of television drama, it is also possible to relate this hybridity to the formal properties of the uncanny. It stands to reason that in *Riget* the supernatural or uncanny elements of the serial exist concurrently with other aspects of the narrative which are almost super-familiar or banal: thus the generic hybridity of the text which sees the supernatural ghost serial crossed with the hospital drama series is a central source of its ‘uncanniness’. The ‘super-familiarity’ of the hospital drama comes, in no small part, from the fact that imported hospital drama like *e.r.* (Amblin/Constant C/Warner Bros Television, 1994-) has had an increasingly burgeoning presence on Danish television after the break down of the state monopoly in the late 1980s¹⁵, particularly with the introduction of cable/satellite stations, although von Trier has stated that reality cop dramas like *Homicide* (Baltimore Picture/Fatima Productions/NBC/MCEG Sterling Entertainment, 1993-99), also part of the North American assault on Danish television, were particularly influential on the generic identity of *Riget*. In essence the generic hybridity of *Riget* makes strange one of the most ‘familiar’ genres on television (the

hospital/medical drama), and by doing so renders the television drama uncanny. In addition, the serial's intertextuality also contributes to the conjunction of the familiar and the strange. A plethora of other television programmes, including *Belphégor*, a French ghost serial set in the Louvre, produced in 1965 and broadcast in various European countries, including Denmark, during the 1960s and 70s, are also referenced by von Trier, both in interviews and within the text itself, to provide a number of familiar television references within his Gothic serial.

The following analysis of the serial's title sequence will demonstrate one of the ways in which the hospital drama is rendered uncanny in *Riget*. Following the opening sequence in the bleaching pools (see above), and a static shot of the title 'The Kingdom' cut into a wooden wall which subsequently bursts open due to a tide of blood mounting behind it, a cut is made to the title sequence which ostensibly looks like the standard credit sequences which were concurrently being deployed to identify slick, US-style hospital drama (see Jacobs (2001) for a thorough analysis of these credit sequences).



Fig. 2.3: *e.r.* credit sequence

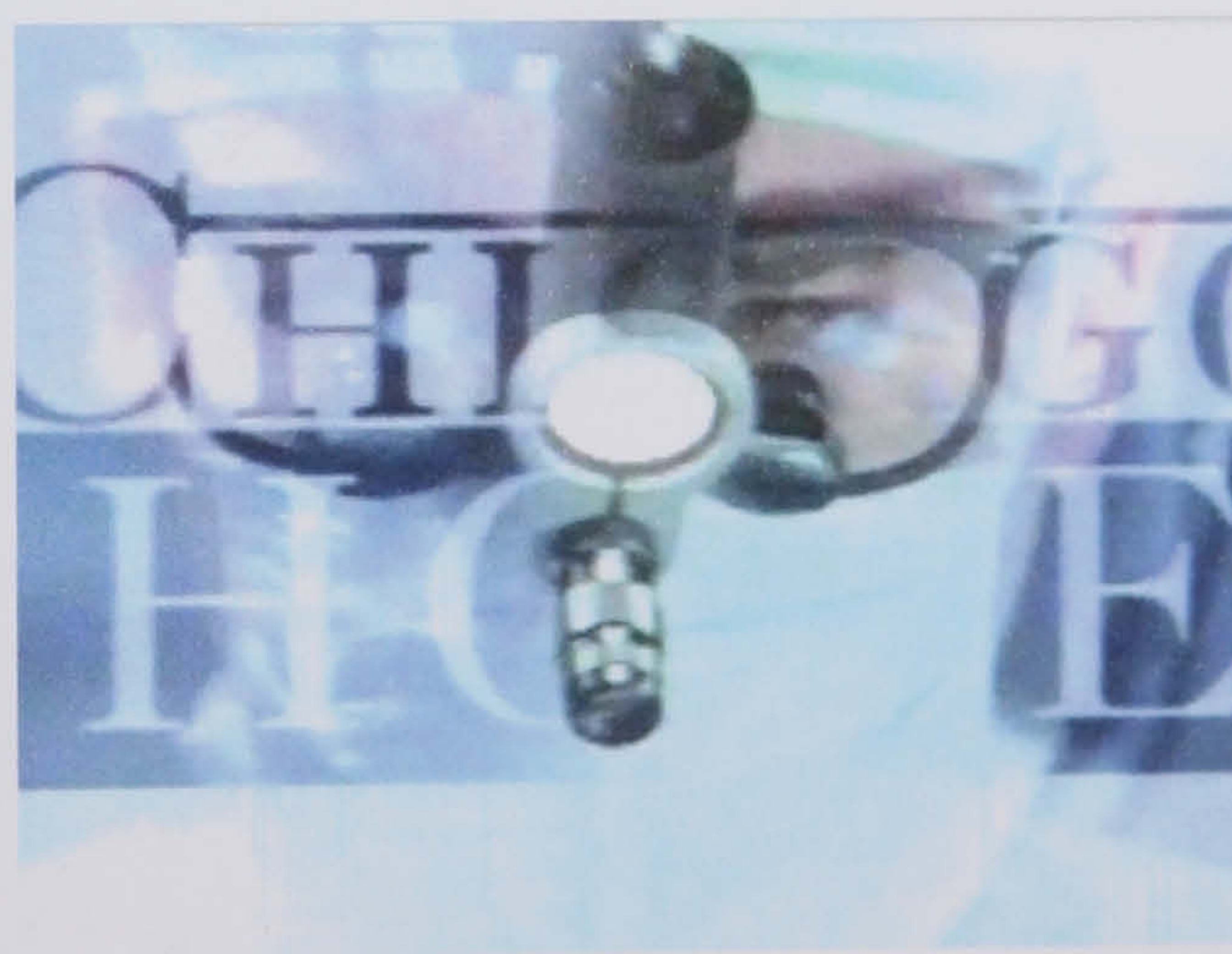


Fig. 2.4: *Chicago Hope* credit sequence

¹⁵ *e.r.* has been broadcast in Denmark as *Skadestuen* on the Swedish channel TV3 from early 1995 onwards.



Fig. 2.5: *Riget* credit sequence



Fig. 2.6: Uncanny shot of an ambulance

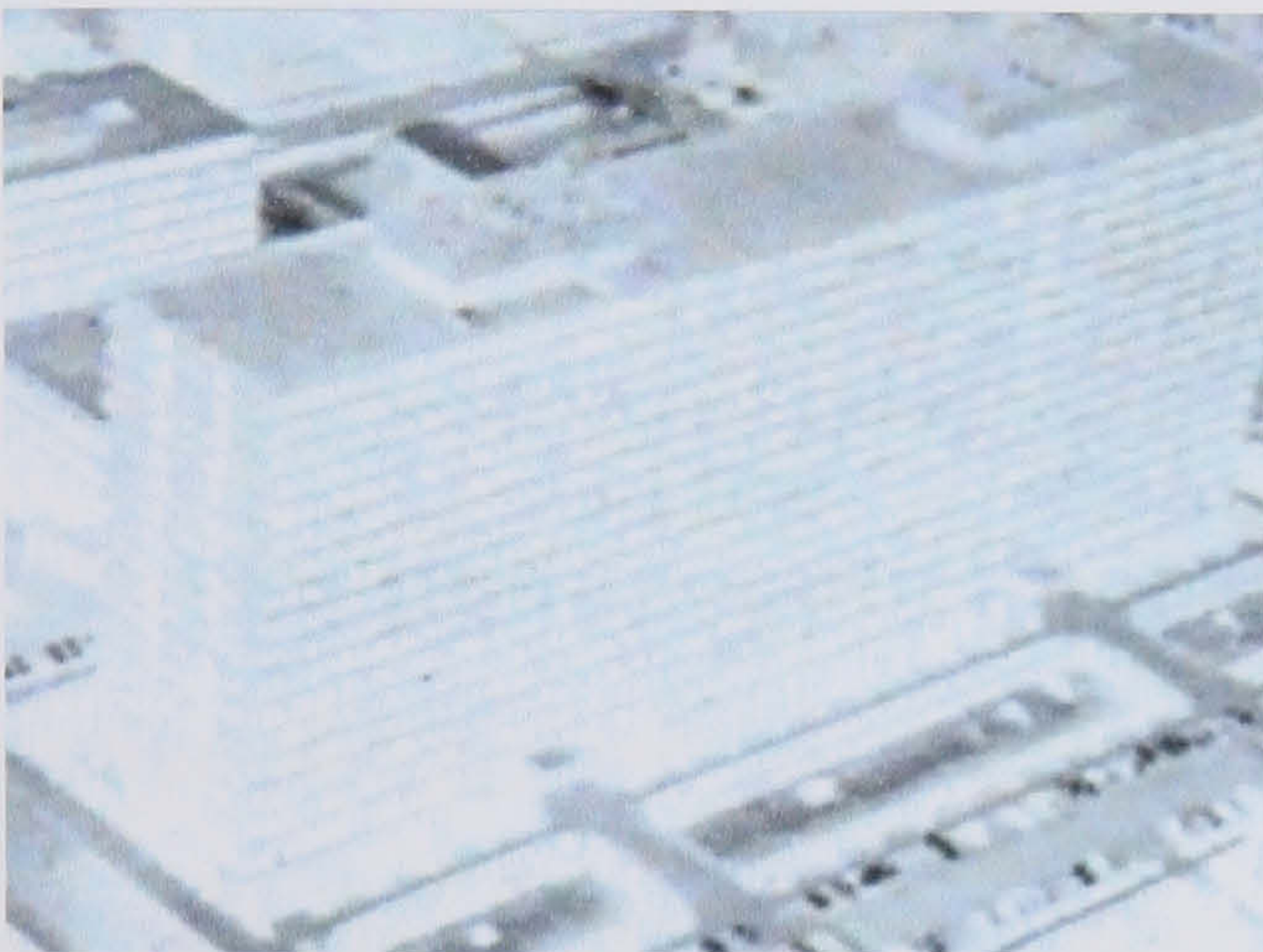


Fig. 2.7: Uncanny shot of the hospital



Fig. 2.8: Uncanny shot from *Nosferatu*

For instance, it shares with both *e.r.* and *Chicago Hope* (20th Century Fox Television/David E. Kelley Productions, 1994-2000) a highly stylised montage sequence of the doctors (and patients) at work to introduce the characters/actors, although the American series use heavy graphics, coloured images, and fast cutting (see figs. 2.3 and 2.4), whereas *Riget* uses its characteristic sepia-toned grainy images as identifiers (see fig. 2.5), images which are also increased in speed. Like the U.S. series, *Riget* also employs a ‘punchy’ synthesised signature tune, although tonally it is far more downbeat and accompanied by grumbling baritone voices chanting ‘The Kingdom’.

However, it is two repeated shots in this sequence which betray this as the title sequence of an uncanny hospital drama, those shots which are shaky and hand-held and appear to be what John Ellis describes as ‘wild footage’, a television-specific version of liveness/immediacy usually found in television news or documentary and characterised by ‘unaesthetic framings, the action caught halfway through a sudden pan... the electronic drop-out, the barely-lit images, the images shot against bright light...’ (2000, 98). Within the hospital drama milieu, in the context of this title sequence, this ‘wild footage’ appears as a tracking shot chasing the rear of an ambulance (see fig. 2.6), and a helicopter shot of the hospital building itself (see fig. 2.7), suggestive of the subjective point of view of an emergency helicopter about to land at the hospital. However, both these shots do not simply reference the ‘wild footage’ of reality television; they are also importantly presented as negative images, thus offering the distinctive identifying ‘stamp’ of the Gothic drama, and a definite mark of difference from the title sequences of *e.r.*, *Chicago Hope*, et al. The negative image has been related to the representation of the Gothic, the supernatural, and, in particular, the uncanny since the arrival of Jonathan Harker’s coach in *Nosferatu - eine Symphonie des Grauens* (see fig. 2.8), and on television since the early 1960s (as discussed in the previous chapter). The particular ability of the negative image to render a representation of a familiar object or location (such as the ambulance and hospital building of the hospital drama) immediately unfamiliar or bizarre is what marks shots such as these uncanny. *Riget* is therefore signalled as a hospital drama with a number of significant differences from the outset of its opening sequence. The programme’s makers utilise the recognisable tropes of the hospital drama credit sequence and the Gothic drama in order to evoke the uncanny through their combination. In fact, this sequence might be seen as a visual metaphor for the ways in

which the serial as a whole constantly slips from the recognisable spaces, characters, and narrative events of the hospital drama (and therefore the world of the rational, the explainable, and the scientific), to the Gothic tropes of the supernatural and the uncanny, in which ghosts and ectoplasm are allowed to infiltrate the hospital (and the hospital drama).

On several occasions von Trier has described his use of the *vérité* style (wobbly, hand-held, grainy footage shot on location) as enabling him to explore generic tropes (which he terms clichés) without alienating his audience; discussing *Riget* and *Breaking the Waves*, he states, ‘[*Breaking the Waves*] has some of the same cliché-like ingredients as [*Riget*]: that’s why I felt it important to give it as realistic a form as possible... the raw documentary style which I’ve laid over the film and which actually annuls and contests it, means that we accept the story as it is’ (Björkman 1996, 12). Von Trier’s theory is that he somehow evades the generic clichés of the hospital drama on television by utilising the *vérité* style, a slightly disingenuous statement given that this style has subsequently become a cliché of recent hospital dramas in itself (cf. Jacobs, 2002). However, it must be noted that the handheld camerawork also produces a Gothic or uncanny ‘cliché’, in that it suggests the presence of the viewer in the text, a device which is frequently deployed in the Gothic television drama (as discussed in the following chapter). The documentary style, with its shaky/handheld cameras, may be read as an attempt to instil in the viewer a sense of ‘being there’, being part of the action, and implicitly, by bringing the viewer into the diegesis through these techniques, the programme makers bring the heimlich (domestic viewer) up close to the unheimlich (supernatural television drama). By reading the *vérité* or objective realist style as simultaneously defamiliarising and engaging, we see the aesthetic strategies of the uncanny drama at work.

Von Trier discusses the conjuncture of the supernatural genre and reality TV in *Riget*'s press release for the Venice Film Festival:

I believe that horror is strongest if it has some kind of sense of reality behind it. If you feel you are just floating somewhere out in some completely surreal universe then you won't have the same feeling of horror as when a situation appears to be real. This becomes mostly a question of mood, but if you want the horror and the spiritual dimension to have power then it's very good to have some of this reality feeling which you get from the hand-held camera – documentary – Reality-TV format. (Zentropa Entertainments and Danmarks Radio, 1994)

This statement, in line with the latter reading of the uses of the *vérité* style, also demonstrates another parallel between the aesthetic of *Riget* and Freud's definition of the uncanny, in that as he scrutinises the relation between the imagined and the real, Freud too concludes that the uncanny sensation in a work of fiction can only be achieved through a disturbance in an essentially realist text, rather than a text which is somehow couched in the realm of the fantastic or the marvellous. As was argued in the first chapter of this thesis, Freud's essay can be seen as a piece of literary analysis, dealing with the uncanny as an aesthetic category, in that he spends a great deal of time discussing the stories of E.T.A. Hoffman and their potential to rouse uncanny feeling in the reader; as he states, 'the uncanny... retains its character not only in experience but in fiction as well, so long as the setting is one of material reality; but where it is given an arbitrary and artificial setting in fiction, it is apt to lose that character' (1990, 375). In light of this statement, the *vérité* camerawork of *Riget* can be seen as an aesthetic strategy that merely adds to its desire to chill or disturb the viewer by tying the uncanny to the world of 'material reality'. An example of the dual

purpose of hand-held camerawork in *Riget* can be seen in the moment in which Mogge, the medical student, enters the morgue with the intent of stealing a head from one of the cadavers.

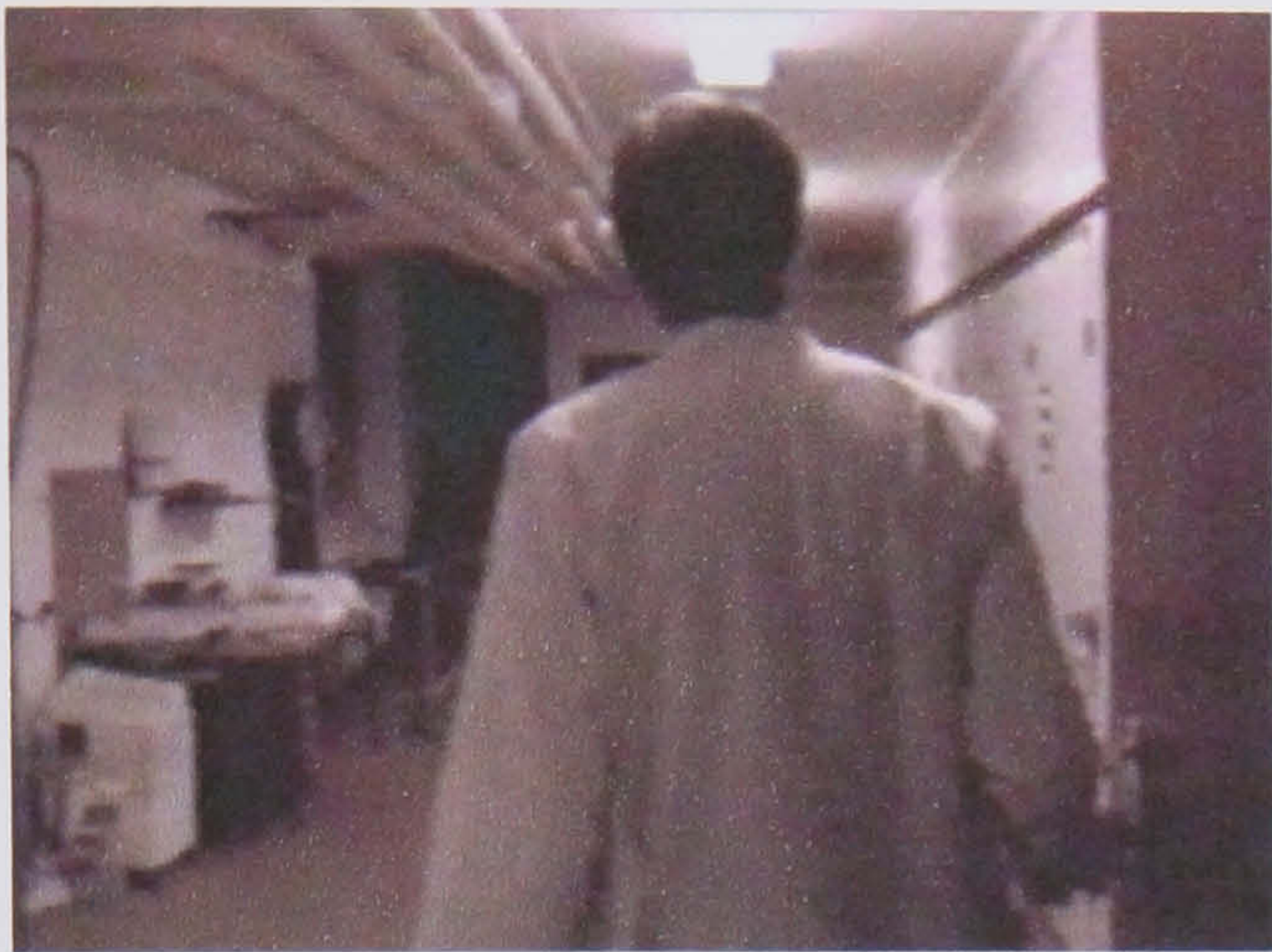


Fig. 2.9: Fly-on-the-wall camerawork

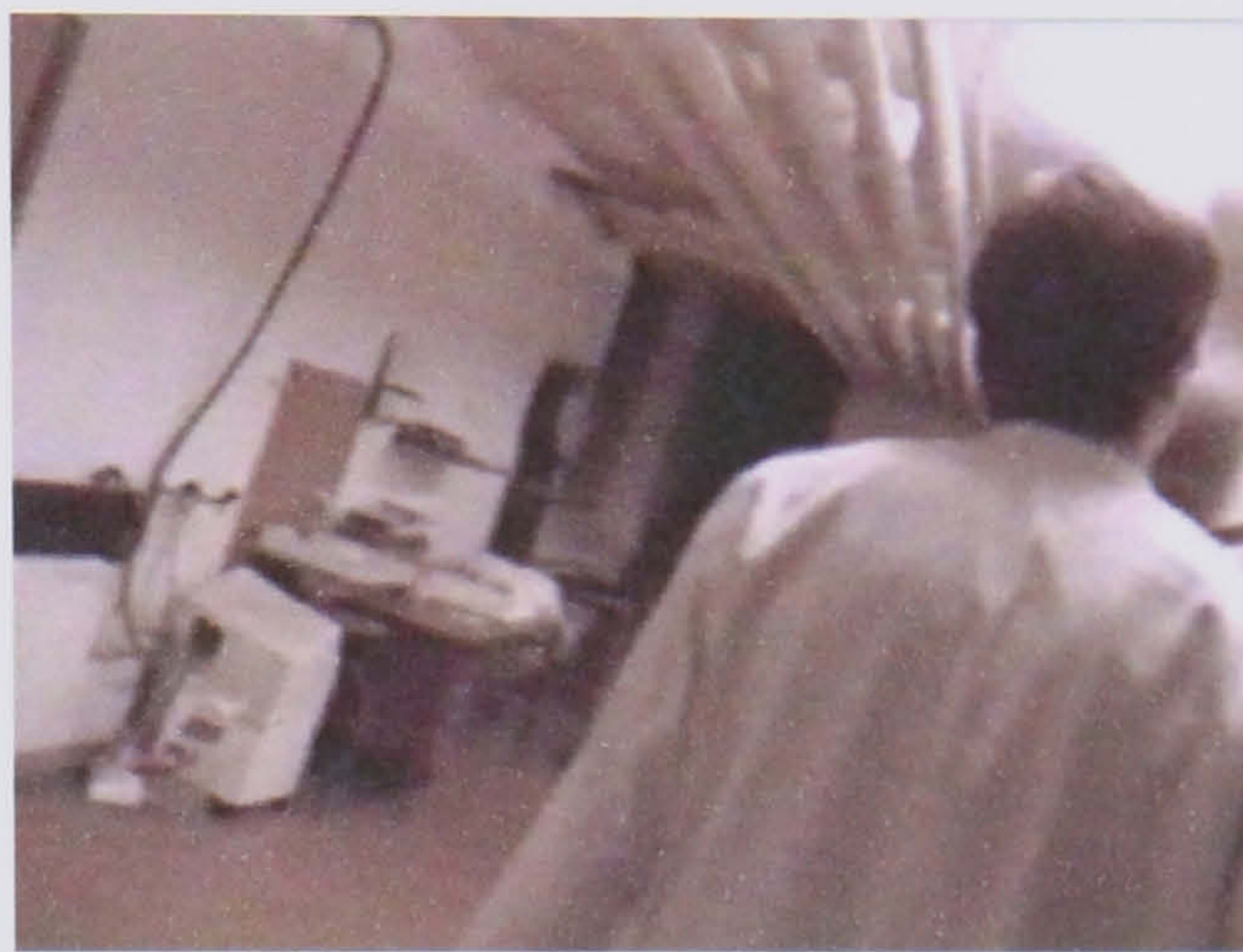


Fig. 2.10: The spirit's point-of-view

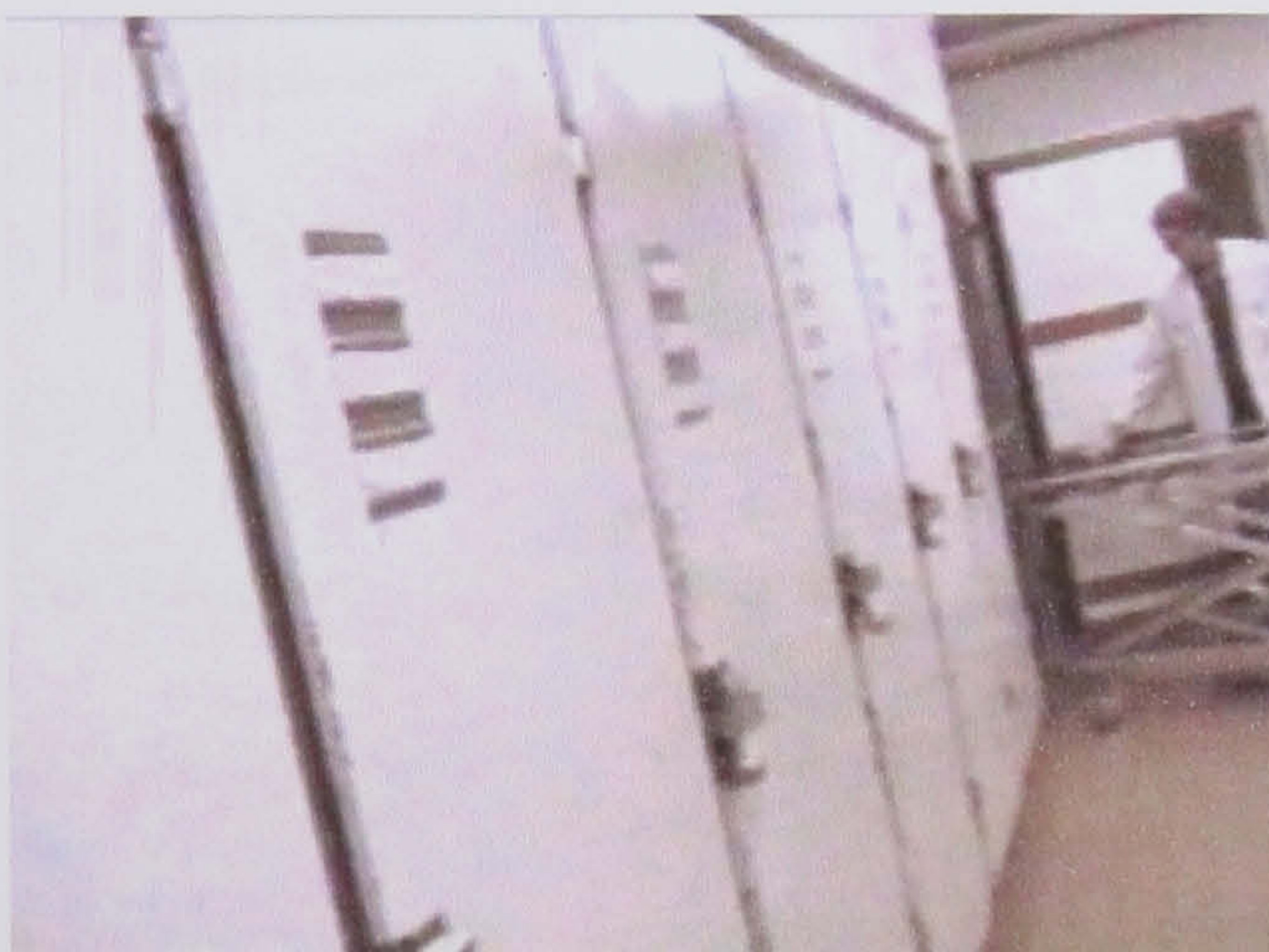


Fig. 2.11: The spirit's point-of-view

As the camera follows him into this room it briefly has the appearance of a fly-on-the-wall television documentary, with the filmmakers tracking a young student doctor on his rounds, the movement of the camera creating a sense of immediacy and co-presence for the viewer (see fig. 2.9). However, once Mogge enters the room the camera suddenly becomes canted, its movements more ethereal and much lighter, as if to suggest the subjective point of view of a spirit, rather than a documentary

filmmaker (see figs. 2.10-2.11). Here, the slight change in framing and movement transforms the realist device into a recognisable trope of Gothic programme making, through the inscription of supernatural subjectivity.¹⁶ In the second series of *Riget*, the subtlety of this form of subjective camerawork is replaced by a more horror-esque version of ghostly point of view, whereby the 'eyes' of the hospital's demons are represented through a garish green filtered image made to reflect the shape and contours of an iris.

Textually, this sense of uncanniness is also played out in the use of location shooting, in that a certain frisson is caused by the fact that the drama is filmed almost entirely within the real location (i.e. the actual hospital named 'Riget' in Copenhagen), and yet the series clearly explores the inadequacies of medical science in dealing with the supernatural, and indeed the mysteries of the human body (through a focus on malignant tumours, brain damage, treatment by hypnotherapy, etc.). This fact creates a tension between the setting and the narrative in almost every scene of *Riget*.

Furthermore, the way that the hospital location is shot plays on the closeness between the realist/hospital drama and supernatural strands, often rendering the building itself uncanny by using shooting techniques which mark the image strange in some way; it is not always clear whether a particular shot lies intentionally within the realms of 'realist' programme making or is intended to imply the presence of the supernatural. For example, an extreme-long aerial shot of the hospital which separates scenes throughout the serial, a stock image from the television hospital drama suggesting the presence of a hovering helicopter waiting to land an urgent patient on the rooftop, may be read as a realist shot, the camera positioned diegetically (i.e. on the helicopter) to convey the urgency of the impending arrival. However, in *Riget* this shot may also be

¹⁶ N.B. A very similar sequence from the US serial *American Gothic*, taking place in a morgue and

read as a supernatural, non-realist aerial shot, a kind of ‘spirits-eye-view’ taken from what is referred to in the serial as ‘Swedenborg space’ (an interstitial place between heaven and hell), thus rendering the shot uncanny. Some subtle peculiarities exist within these shots which appear several times during the serial to mark them as potentially supernatural, such as the ‘spooky’ incidental music which always accompanies the shot and the sepia tint to the image, but, on the whole, these shots serve to draw attention to the closeness of the two concurrent generic strands.

Just as the realist aesthetic of the hospital drama coexists with a representation of the supernatural and the uncanny in *Riget*, so concurrent realist and supernatural narrative strands run throughout the serial: the ‘realist strand’ or, more correctly, the hospital drama strand, follows the story of Helmer’s botched operation and the activities of hospital staff (conflict over rank, romances, etc.), whereas the supernatural strand follows Mrs. Drusse uncovering the stories of Mary, the ghost girl, and Registrar Judith who has been impregnated with the child of Mary’s ghostly father, Åge Krüger. These two sets of generic strands, forming *Riget*’s status as a hybrid television drama, bring each storyline into stark relief by their co-presence. In the dishwasher sequences, in which two hospital workers with Downs Syndrome act as a kind of Greek Chorus, commenting obscurely on the action in each episode, the characters obliquely refer to this tension between the two strands of the narrative through the ambiguity of their statements, in that the viewer cannot be sure whether they are referring to supernatural or ‘real’ events which are taking place in the hospital. For example, in the first dishwasher sequence of episode two, directly after a meeting in which Helmer’s botched brain operation on the child Mona is discussed, the following exchange between the dishwashers takes place:

using a ‘floating’ camera to suggest the presence of a spirit, is discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

Dishwasher One: This plate isn't clean. The walls are flaking. Can't you do anything?

Dishwasher Two: It'll wash off. Some things can't be washed off.

Dishwasher One: What do you mean?

Dishwasher Two: Some blood can be washed off. Some blood can't be washed off.

The comments made by the second dishwasher here simultaneously refer to both Helmer's attempt to cover up ('wash off') the scandal of Mona's operation (her 'blood') and the covering up of Åge Krüger's murder of Mary, his illegitimate child, resulting in the supernatural eruptions of blood all over the hospital grounds which literally cannot be washed off. In bringing together these two strands through their ambiguous dialogue, the dishwashers highlight the simultaneity or coexistence of both strands, and again draw attention to the conflict between the rational sciences and the belief in spirituality, perhaps the overriding theme of *Riget*.

The episodic structure of the serial narrative is used to reinforce this tension, in that crosscutting between supernatural and realist/hospital drama strands also draws attention to their inextricability. A scene where Helmer harangues Judith and Krogen Hook, saying 'If you're fit enough to book a CT scan, you'll be fit enough to attend a meeting now', is cut immediately to Mrs. Drusse holding a séance, thus drawing a direct comparison between the two 'meetings' (the hospital meeting and the spiritual meeting). Again, at the end of this séance, as Mrs. Drusse calls out 'If any spirits be here give a sign' we cut immediately to a close-up of Mona's brain scans, a 'sign' from the rational world of hospital science and an image extracted from the Gothic image repertoire (the skull). In both of the above cases, editing is used to suggest a

doubling in the two strands, almost as if the supernatural narrative strand exists as the double of the realist/hospital drama narrative strand.

Representations of the uncanny – *Riget* and the Gothic return

Riget is therefore a dramatic exploration of the impact of the supernatural on the rational, scientific world of medicine. Unlike the crises and disruptions of the more usual hospital serial drama on television (such as *e.r.* or *Casualty* (BBC, 1986-)) which centre around the emotional turmoil of quotidian melodrama (love affairs, family disputes, etc.), *Riget* locates most of its dramatic conflict in supernatural ‘turmoil’ (hauntings, possession, etc.), and particularly in the presence of the uncanny. The following analysis will therefore focus on the ways in which the uncanny is represented within the ghost drama on television, particularly in conjunction with the occurrence of hauntings as recurrences from the past, and will look at how *Riget* explores images and themes of ‘return’ and repetition within its uncanny narrative.

Freud’s definition of the uncanny begins with the statement that it is ‘that class of frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar’ (1990, 340). This hypothesis, that the uncanny is somehow inextricably linked to the return of the past, either metaphorically (e.g. through a sense of déjà vu or an unsettling feeling of recognition), or literally (such as unintentionally repeatedly returning to the same location, or, indeed, the belief that one is being haunted), is of utmost importance to a reading of *Riget* as an uncanny text.

In the bleachers sequence, shown at the beginning of each episode, it is clear to see how this sense of uncanny ‘return’ is marked out from the beginning of the narrative each week. During a series of slow dissolves from and to sepia toned images

of the bleachers working, creating visual palimpsests whereby the trace of each image ‘haunts’ the next, the extra-diegetic voice-over monologue highlights the nature of the haunting in *Riget*: that of the natural/irrational/unscientific world of the past haunting the technological/rational/scientific world of the present, within the site of the hospital. The soporific voice intones,

[t]he ground under the hospital is ancient marshland. Here bleachers once soaked and worked great lengths of cloth. It was a place permanently wreathed in fog. Hospital doctors and scientists now work here, the finest brains using the most advanced technology. To crown their work, the hospital is named ‘The Kingdom’. Ignorance and superstition would never rule here again. Perhaps arrogance and denial of the spiritual have become too much, for it is as though the fog has returned. No one knows it yet, but the portals of The Kingdom are reopening.

What this dialogue establishes is that the hauntings and supernatural disturbances which are set to disrupt the hospital centre around the *return* of that which is ‘known of old and long familiar’ in Freud’s words; namely a belief in existence beyond the scientific, explained world. Paul Coates, in a discussion of the occurrence of the uncanny within early German Expressionist cinema, has noted the following: ‘the world becomes uncanny when it is perceived as no longer simple substance, but also as shadow, a sign of the existence of a world beyond itself, which it is nevertheless unable to fully disclose’ (1991, 1). To relate this statement to an analysis of *Riget*, the opening voice-over in the bleachers sequence expresses this sense of the uncanny as the partial disclosure of a ‘world beyond itself’ which, in the context of this serial, is also inherently linked to a world *returning* from the past. In light of this, the fissures and fractures which appear in the hospital building mark out the eruptions of this

return, with the blood and ectoplasm which pushes through the concrete of the hospital building inextricably tying this uncanny haunting to a primordial world.

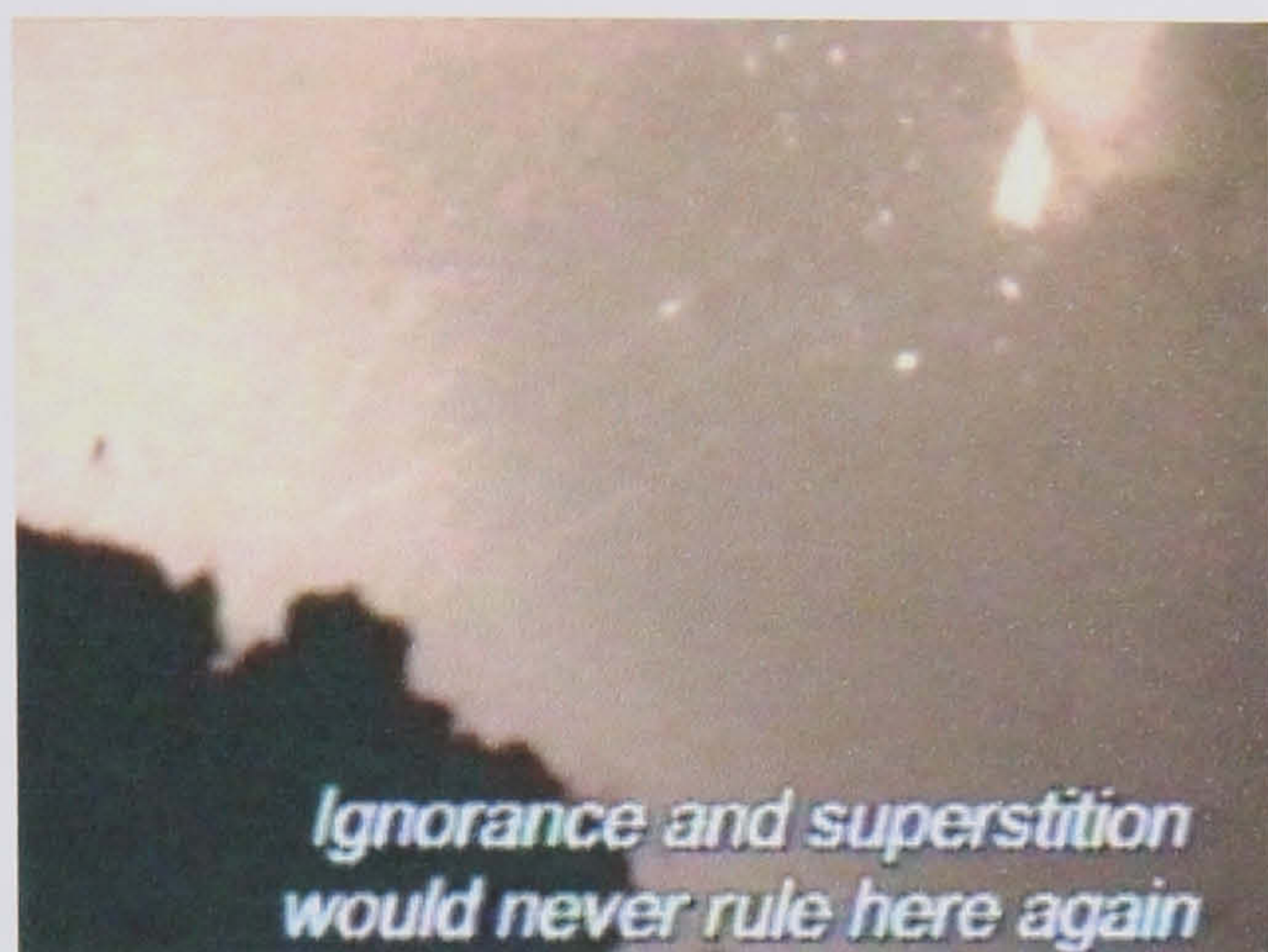


Fig. 2.12: Descent into the netherworld



Fig. 2.13: Return of Mary's abject body

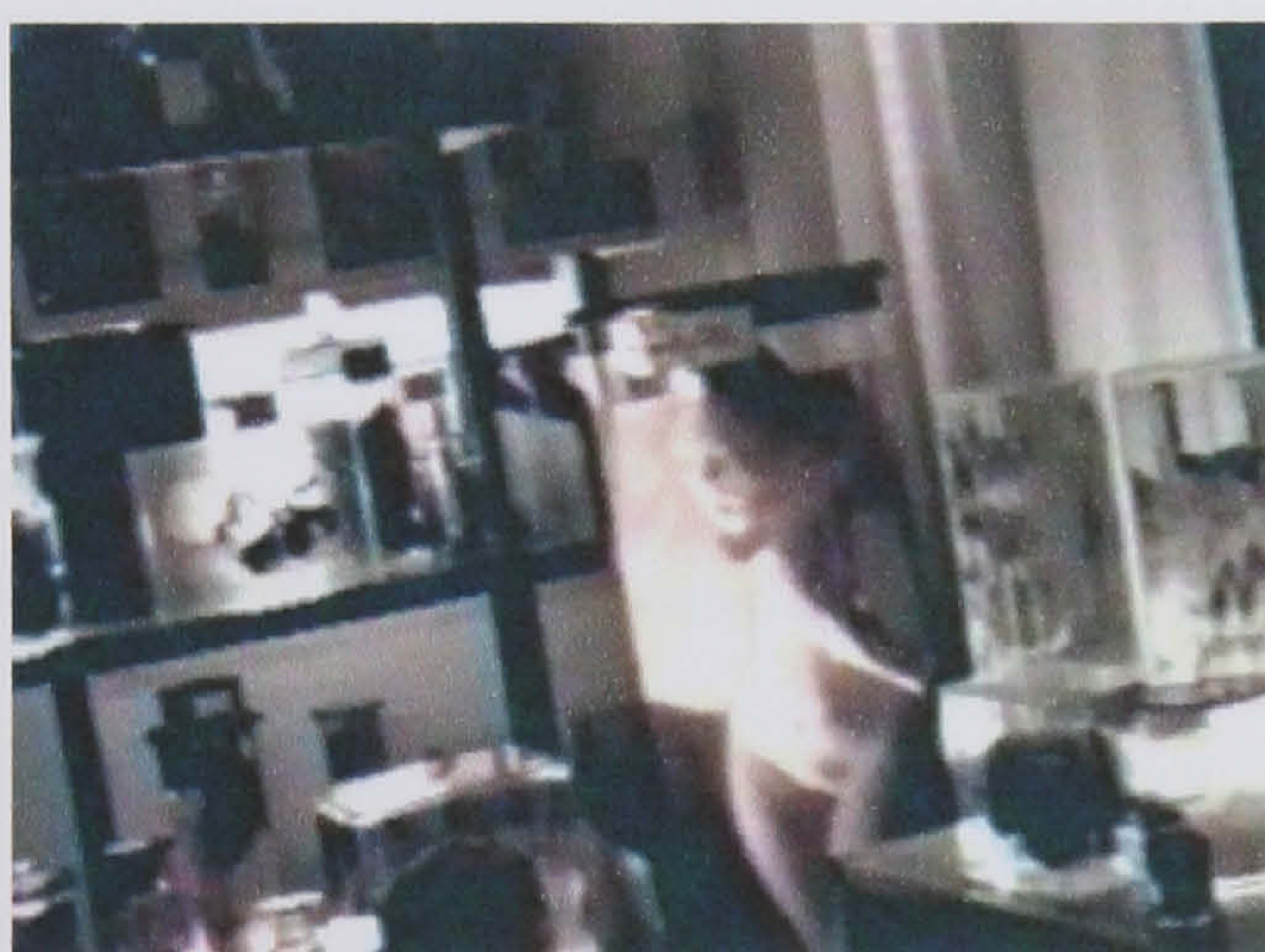


Fig. 2.14: Mary's other body

The single shot which most eloquently visualises this 'return' during the bleachers sequence is the extended opening tracking shot (discussed above in relation to *Riget*'s dual identity as both cinema and television). During this shot, which appears to be continuous, the camera tracks down from a medium close-up of hands pushing cloth into the water, into the water (see fig. 2.12), and on into the ground of the marshland to a cavernous underground space where a pair of hands push up from the earth, as if belonging to a reanimated corpse (see fig. 2.13). This camera movement

downwards (which will be mirrored throughout the serial as the camera follows Mrs. Drusse and others down in the hospital's haunted elevator) represents a certain 'draw' toward those supernatural forces which erupt throughout *Riget*, and visualises a 'return' to a primordial space, a space existent before the scientific or the rational came into being. This Gothic vision of a supernatural 'return' thereby marks a kind of rebirth of the abject and irrational body within, or actually beneath, the order and rationality of the hospital; indeed, the contrast of this image and the next time we see the child's body so substantially, when it is contained within a large glass jar in Bondo's laboratory (see fig. 2.14), is telling. Whereas the body is contained by the jar in the hospital, suspended in perpetual inertia by the preserving fluids, here the body of the dead girl breaks out into the mess and chaos of an underground hole, in an image which prefigures the ruptures to come in the following episodes. Here the subterranean space beneath the hospital gives birth to the supernatural, just as, later in the series, the subterranean and interstitial spaces of the hospital become the focus of its haunting (the basement and lift shaft are the places in which the ghosts appear most frequently throughout, and the car park is the site of a spectacular eruption of fluid from the space beneath the hospital). It should be noted that the metaphor of giving birth is used intentionally here; throughout *Riget* maternity and childbirth are assigned a kind of uncanny horror, right up to the moment where Judith gives birth to the fully grown Udo Kier, and thus her lover, Åge (also played by Kier), returns to the womb by having his identical adult likeness appear between the registrar's legs in one of the few moments of true horror in this first series. Indeed, in the second series of *Riget* this oversized baby, referred to as 'little brother', becomes increasingly grotesque as it grows at an alarming rate, until the point at which the baby asks his mother to kill him, thus saving the hospital (and the rest of the world) from his demonic father. In light of

this narrative preoccupation with maternity and childbirth, the subterranean space in which the body of the ghost child reappears may be read as a kind of grotesque womb.

The highest point in the hospital is depicted in direct opposition to the underground space which is characterised as simultaneously maternal and grotesque. The roof-top on which the contemptible Helmer stands as the evil villain atop his metaphorical castle, is seen as the preserve of all that is scientific and rational. Before the surgeon is won over by the lure of voodoo magic (at the end of the first series), he distances himself here, not only from the colleagues he despises but also from the lower regions of the hospital which have come to stand for the irrational and the unexplained, such as the car park where his much-loved Volvo was damaged in an eruption of amniotic fluid from beneath the paving slabs. After confronting the mother of the child whose brain he damaged in a bungled operation, Helmer retreats to the rooftop, and from here addresses his homeland, Sweden, which is visible in the distance. As he shouts ‘Here is Denmark, shat out of chalk and water. Over the water, Sweden, hewn from granite. Bloody Danes’, a cut is made to a medium long aerial shot as Helmer throws his arms up to the sky as if appealing to science and reason to save him from the ‘messiness’ of Denmark (as represented by the hospital as a microcosm of Danish society). It is clear from his upward plea that Helmer wishes to distance himself from the disorder of the lower regions of the hospital, a chaos which, the viewer is informed, stems from underneath the very foundations of the building.

To return to the notion that much of the uncanniness in *Riget* rests on repetition, it can be argued that the formal organisation of the television serial strengthens this sense of ‘uncanny return’. The inherent qualities of serial drama, whereby the narrative returns to the same characters, locations, and situations each week, relies precisely on a repetitive structure to re-identify the series (such as

repetition of certain graphics or a particular credit sequence. or, in the case of *Riget*, the repetition of the 'bleachers' sequence at the beginning of each episode) and to re-familiarise the viewer with the 'story so far' (through expository dialogue and the 'last week on *Riget*' recap montage before the drama begins). It has been argued by Richard Dyer that it is this 'mix of repetition and anticipation, and indeed the anticipation of repetition, which underpins serial pleasure' (1997, 14); however, in the context of *Riget* this serial pleasure is also underpinned by a kind of serial uncanniness, whereby the repetitions of the serial reinforce an uncanny feeling of *dreadful* recognition. This is not to argue that all serial television is uncanny in its structural repetitions or returns: rather, that the serial form lends itself particularly well to a drama of the uncanny in which the processes of viewer recognition strengthen a feeling of uncanniness. As Freud suggests, '[repetition] does undoubtedly, subject to certain conditions and combined with certain circumstances, arouse an uncanny feeling' (1990, 358-9): in the context of *Riget*, these conditions and circumstances are the narrative preoccupations with the supernatural and the uncanny.

Throughout the serial's narrative, a series of recurrences take place, building on this link between repetition and the uncanny. Most notable of these are Mrs Drusse's flashback sequences, whereby a montage of sounds and images from earlier in the serial is re-run to represent her own feeling of uncanniness, a visualisation of the haunting of memory which also allows the viewer to revisit the relevant incidents in the narrative. Indeed, the recurrent events and pieces of dialogue, such as a ringing bell and the line 'Why must I die?' which are repeated throughout the serial, delineating the moments of Mary's haunting, also become part of this uncanny repetition.

However, Mrs Drusse's flashback sequences are not only montages of sounds and images from earlier in the serial. They also give the viewer direct access to the

back-story of the death of Mary at the hands of her father, Dr. Åge Krüger. This is seen in a sequence following the receipt of a letter telling of Mary's attempted escape from the hospital, given to her by the dying Ellen Krüger, in which Mrs Drusse's flashback or memory sequences also allow for the repetition or return of events which the viewer has not yet witnessed. This supernatural flashback, whereby Mrs Drusse 'remembers' events which she had no knowledge of before, is introduced as an interpolation of the narrative, through an extreme close-up pan across the words of the letter, 'Mary was naughty yesterday' (also shakily read on the voice-over) (see fig. 2.15).

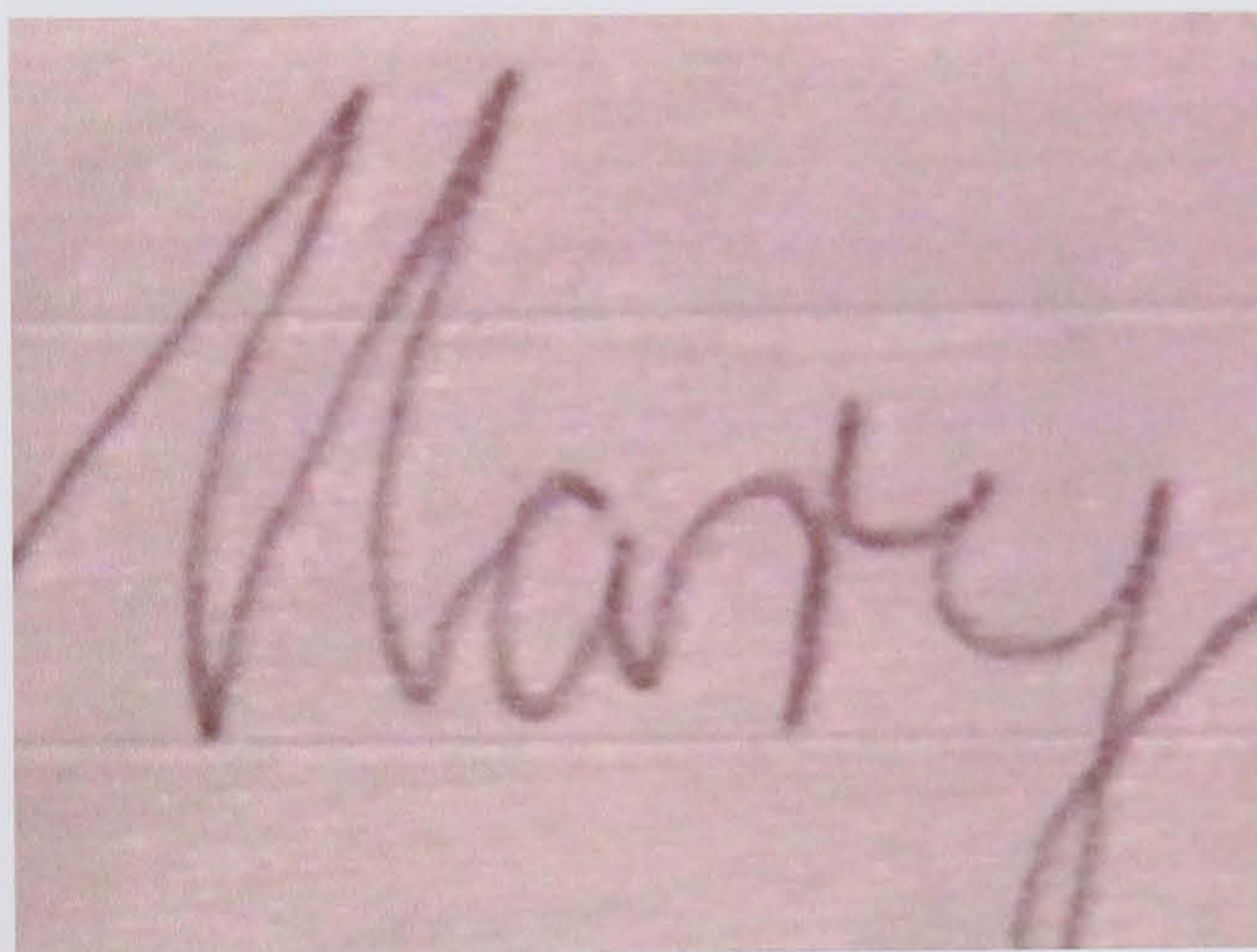


Fig. 2.15: Close-up of the interpolated text

This shot acts as a direct audio-visualisation of the moment, common to many Gothic novels and also to many adaptations of Gothic fiction on television (as discussed in chapters two and four of this thesis), whereby another narrational voice takes over the text through the insertion of a 'found' document such as a letter or diary, or even extended reportage of first person narration from a character other than the original

narrator¹⁷. In *Riget*, Mrs Drusse acts as a kind of conduit whereby these other voices and stories may enter the narrative directly, and from this opening shot marking the moment of interpolation, a cut is made to a sepia-toned backward tracking shot of Mary running towards the camera, outside in the rain (see fig. 2.16).



Fig. 2.16: Sepia-toned flashback

The following sequence, shot through darker brown filters to give it the sepia-toned quality which marks it with the ‘pastness’ of a memory/flashback sequence, shows Åge Krüger and a pack of dogs chasing Mary through rain-soaked undergrowth. A series of fast jump-cut hand held shots, which convey the panic of the little girl through their frenetic, delirious movements, are interspersed with re-establishing close-ups of Mrs. Drusse’s hands on the letter, reminding the viewer that the sequence originates in her mind, although stretching beyond the confines of her own memory. This sequence therefore acts as a direct uncanny return within episode four of *Riget*, in that it represents both an uncanny memory within the mind of Mrs. Drusse (uncanny in that it is a memory/return which can not be assigned to her own (un)conscious) and,

¹⁷ A classic example of this would be the extended interpolation of Mrs. Dean the housekeeper in the novel *Wuthering Heights*, after the (uncertain) haunting of Mr. Lockwood by Cathy Earnshaw.

by extension, it marks a ‘return’ of the back-story within the drama itself, albeit a repetition of events which have only been inferred in the narrative up to this point.

Later in the same episode, blue-screen technology is used in order to present another montage sequence of images/sounds (from the sepia-toned flashback discussed above, and from elsewhere in the serial) which represent Mrs. Drusse’s memories, as she pieces together the story behind the hospital’s hauntings. Behind a medium close-up of Mrs. Drusse looking puzzled, and to the accompaniment of incidental music played in reverse (another strategy to de-familiarise the familiar), a sequence of twenty four shots of the ghost and images connected with the hauntings are shown in quick succession (described below), with Mrs. Drusse’s face solidly overlaid in front of the montage to denote the fact that these are presented as her memories (see fig. 2.17).



Fig. 2.17: Mrs. Drusse’s memory montage

Shot One: Long shot of hospital corridors

Shot Two: Mary in the rain-soaked flashback, running

Shot Three: An extreme close-up of Mary’s mouth and nose in her formaldehyde jar

Shot Four: A canted extreme long shot of the lift shaft

Shot Six: Medium close-up of the candle that Mary used to contact Mrs. Drusse

Shot Seven: Close-up of Mrs. Drusse's fingers covered with blood in the lift shaft

Shot Eight: Bleached out shot of Mrs. Drusse's torchlight, revealing her peering face

Shot Nine: Mary's ghostly face in the lift shaft

Shot Ten: Jump cut to closer shot of shot eight – Ellen Krüger's voice-over states 'Mary is ill in Father's hospital'

Shot Eleven: Extreme close-up of hearing test equipment

Shot Twelve: Medium aerial shot of Ellen Krüger floating in the swimming pool

Shot Thirteen: Close-up of Mary and a dog in a newspaper cutting

Shot Fourteen: Close-up of porter's possessed dog, with glowing red eyes

Shot Fifteen: Exterior long shot of the rear of the ghostly ambulance

Shot Sixteen: Repeat shot two

Shot Seventeen: Medium shot of side of ambulance

Shot Eighteen: Extreme close-up of end of fluorescent light tube flicking on and off

Shot Nineteen: Extreme close-up of candle flame blowing out

Shot Twenty: Close-up of surveillance camera image of ghost ambulance arriving – Mrs. Drusse's voice-over states 'Why don't you want me to talk to Mary?'

Shot Twenty-one: Same shot closer

Shot Twenty-two: Same shot closer

Shot Twenty-three: Medium shot of Mary's body in formaldehyde
being lowered into the ground

Shot Twenty-four: Medium long shot of Mrs. Drusse in the hearing
booth which racks out of focus – Mary's voice-over asks 'Why must I be
killed?'

Shot Twenty-five: Repeat shot twenty-one – shot bleaches out

This sequence, as a visualisation of Mrs. Drusse's feelings of uncanniness (*déjà vu* or memory-confusion), offers the viewer a series of repetitions from earlier in the drama (repeated images and pieces of dialogue), although the quick-cutting which takes place here ostensibly prevents the viewer from attaining any sense of surety in making sense of the narrative. Like Mrs. Drusse, the viewer is led to feel here that these images prompt recognition and familiarity in the story of the ghost girl, Mary, as if by recalling these images the viewer may be close to 'understanding' the serial, and yet the 'just glimpsed' impermanence of the television image does not allow the viewer to be sure of what they have just seen, nor make the connections between the various shots in this sequence; the lack of an expository voice-over also adds to this confusion. In addition, this moment, as piece of highly subjective editing/image manipulation within a predominantly realist text which has few special effects and low-tech hand-held camerawork, draws attention to itself as a moment of aesthetic uncanniness. What S.S. Prawer describes as the 'avant-garde devices' of Gothic television ('violently clashing images, unusual angles of vision... etc.' (1980, 21)) are utilised in montage here to portray the convergence of the past and the present, the

supernatural and the scientific, as a conjecture which produces an extreme sense of the uncanny.

Four key figures can be seen to represent the uncanny in *Riget*: Mary, Mona, and the Dishwashers. In the latter part of this examination of the Gothic serial drama, their roles will be considered. It will have become evident from the preceding analysis that, unsurprisingly, the figure of the ghost girl, Mary, lies at the centre of the uncanny hospital drama. The girl, who appears for the most part as an insubstantial figure overlaid on top of the backgrounds of the lift shaft, subterranean corridor, operating theatre, etc., functions as an uncanny character within *Riget* in that she is simultaneously there and not there, part of the past and yet has the ability to appear within situations in the present. Her appearance perhaps relates to the fact that, as Freud proposes, '[m]any people experience the feeling [of uncanniness] in the highest degree in relation to death and dead bodies, to the return of the dead, and to spirits and ghosts' (1990, 364). Indeed, this source of uncanny feeling is also commented on directly within the serial by the pathologist, Professor Bondo, who delivers a lengthy speech about respecting the dead which begins with the following line: 'I say that the fear of being touched, the fear of getting closer to others, is the fear of death'. Mary is the literal manifestation of this source of uncanniness in *Riget*, an uncanniness which is continually presented to the viewer through the presence of both of Mary's bodies on screen: her ghostly body (and occasionally disembodied voice) overlaid on top of the vérité-style location shooting, and the preserved, grotesque body which Bondo keeps in a jar in his laboratory. Whenever these bodies appear on screen, the uncanniness of *Riget* is brought to the fore, as both her dead body and her ghostly body represent the threat of death within the hospital environment. Of course, this

obsession with death is not just a part of the serial's identity as a Gothic/uncanny drama: this obsession is also generic of the hospital drama series on television.

However, aside from acting as a reminder of the uncanny closeness of death to life in the hospital drama, Mary also has another uncanny function within the Gothic narrative of *Riget*. In relation to the 'realist' storyline of Helmer's bungled brain operation, which, as was outlined above, runs concurrently with the supernatural ghost storyline in the serial, Mary can also be seen as a *doppelgänger* or double of the brain damaged Mona. Just as the ghost story strand may be seen as the realist hospital drama strand's double within the narrative (as argued above), so the two girls' physical resemblance, the similarities of their fates at the hand of two Machiavellian doctors, and even the relative similarity of their names (Mary and Mona) mark them out as the generic twins of the Gothic drama; as Antonio Ballesteros González has outlined, '[t]he *doppelgänger* or 'double' constitutes a recurrent motif in Gothic and horror literature... The presence of this second self or *alter ego*, an archetype of otherness... haunts innumerable literary works of Gothic and fantasy' (1998, 264).



Fig. 2.18: The doppelgängers

In the second episode of *Riget*, a series of quiet static shots of Mona rocking in her room to the sound of a dripping tap finishes on a medium-long overhead shot of Mona sitting with Mary, the two girls identically posed to draw attention to these resemblances and similarities (see fig. 2.18). In relation to the previous reading of Mary as the uncanny representative of death within the narrative, her position as Mona's double also strengthens this reading; as Freud notes, the doppelgänger has long been seen as 'the uncanny harbinger of death' (1990, 357). The obvious parallels drawn between the two girls thus draw on the convention of the doppelgänger or double within the Gothic drama, highlighting the uncanny nature of the text and its obsession with mortality.

Another major source of the uncanny in *Riget* is located in the figures of the Dishwashers. These two characters, played by Vita Jensen and Morten Rotne Leffers, both actors with Downs Syndrome, appear on several occasions throughout each episode in a large hospital washing-up area. They never interact with the other characters in the serial but act as a kind of omniscient 'Greek chorus', commenting in short, abstract pieces of cryptic dialogue on the unfurling events in the hospital while they work. It may be argued that in casting these actors in this role, von Trier plays on their disability and, in a rather crude way, their status as 'strange' performers¹⁸. The unfamiliarity of the disabled actor in a television drama also compounds these moments in the serial as formally disruptive, and the particular tonal qualities of their speech give the dialogue an unusual delivery¹⁹.

¹⁸ Von Trier has been criticised for this characterisation, in that he utilises an unfavourable stereotype of disabled people as somehow 'othered'. As Adam Mars-Jones commented in *The Independent*, 'It is still unsatisfactory to show Down's Syndrome people as eerie children (they are fully aware of all the ghosts) who have no part in the human world (we only see them interact with each other).' (28.12.95, 11).

¹⁹ N.B. Two other actors, Peter Gilsfort and Ruth Junkor, dubbed the voices of the dishwashers

These two figures are very much aligned with spiritualism in *Riget*, a fact that draws on a historical representation of the link between disability and the supernatural world, whereby people with disabilities are believed to possess the ability to communicate beyond the ‘worldly’ arena²⁰. Like the ghostly Mary in the lift shaft, they are contained within the dishwashing room as a kind of interstice, and within this in-between space they appear as the voice of uncanny sensation, highlighting the events within the narrative which may be read as having uncanny connotations and commenting on the supernatural events which ensue. For example, in episode two of the serial Leffers says, ‘events repeat themselves all the time’ (relating to the sensation of déjà vu which is inherent to the narrative of *Riget*), to which Vita Jensen replies ‘It’s uncanny’ and Leffers adds ‘It *is* uncanny’. This commentary on the programme’s status as an uncanny drama is extremely self-aware; indeed, in a rather postmodern cycle of knowingness, the phrase ‘It’s uncanny’ became the ‘catch-phrase’ of the series after its first broadcast in Denmark, with fans imitating the delivery of the dishwashers. Therefore, this diegetic commentary not only highlights the uncanny nature of the drama, but again draws attention to the status of *Riget* as unusual ‘art television’. This formal disruption, more usually found in classical theatre than realist television drama, marks out the serial’s artistic distinction as much as it comments on a sense of uncanny return within the narrative.

To conclude this delineation of *Riget*’s status as a drama of the uncanny, it is necessary to return to the serial’s domestic reception context and to think about the ways in which television as a medium has been read as uncanny in itself. This argument, that television acts as an uncanny object within the home, has been made in a number of critical studies. For example, Lenora Ledwon, in her article on *Twin*

²⁰ See for example William Horwood’s novel *Skallagrigg*, adapted for British television by the BBC in

Peaks and the television Gothic, makes much of the literal meaning of the word uncanny as relating to the ‘homely’ and proposes the following:

Just as the *heimlich* contains within it the *unheimlich*, so does the familiar domestic home contain within it the Gothic potential of television. The home contains the uncanny. The uncanny is familiar and terrible in its familiarity. Television is the ghost in the home, a barely perceptible presence that can be at once familiar and strangely disturbing...

Television’s Gothic potential stems in large part from its reassuring domesticity (its “natural” presence and acceptance in the home) combined with its under-utilised ability to disrupt viewers’ comfortable notions of domesticity. (1993, 263-264)

Similarly, Jeffrey Sconce, in a discussion of American culture’s persistent association of electronic media with paranormal phenomena, describes ‘an uncanny and perhaps even sinister component’ (2000, 4) in television as a broadcast media.

Sound and image without material substance, the electronically mediated worlds of telecommunications often evoke the supernatural by creating virtual beings that appear to have no physical form. By bringing this spectral world into the home, the TV set in particular can take on the appearance of a haunted apparatus. (ibid.)

What both of these critical views propose then is that the medium of television is particularly suited to the representation of the supernatural, and that, furthermore, there is something about the way in which television receives its broadcast data, and the way in which it is positioned within the home, which renders the television set/screen as uncanny. Indeed, Sconce goes on to argue that many of those qualities

1994, which characterises its central characters with cerebral palsy as being able to communicate with

which have delineated television's medium-specific status (liveness, simultaneity, intimacy, etc.) are reliant precisely on an uncanny reading of the television set, as an object which has the ability to transport the viewer or the viewing object (the television programme) across both space and time. Although these theories problematically rest upon metaphorical readings of television (television as a 'ghost' (Ledwon), or a 'haunted apparatus' (Sconce)), their delineation of the uncanny nature of the television screen is worth pursuing in the context of this analysis.



Fig. 2.19: TV set as uncanny object



Fig. 2.20: TV set as uncanny object

Whilst the above examination of *Riget* has argued that the uncanny is present in a number of ways, it is also important to note that the series begins by encouraging a reading of the *television set* as an uncanny or supernatural object. In a scene which immediately follows the title sequence, the arrival of a ghost ambulance at the hospital is seen through a diegetic television screen (albeit one which is hooked up to the hospital's closed-circuit television [CCTV] network). The uncanny nature of the small screen is therefore emphasised when the ambulance is shown on the TV screen in the porter's office (fig. 2.19) and then in a number of increasingly close shots of this

each other telepathically.

screen (fig. 2.20), the familiar image (of grainy CCTV footage) rendered uncanny by the extreme amplification of the image (and by the fact that ambulance 'disappears' when Krogen Hook arrives and looks toward the ghostly object without the mediation of television). Here, at the beginning of *Riget*, the haunting is 'channelled' through small screen technology, imbuing the TV set/monitor with a kind of uncanny power in a moment of acute self-awareness for a Gothic hospital drama preoccupied with sounds and images of the uncanny.

The Female Gothic: Women, Domesticity, and the Gothic Television Adaptation

The following chapter brings together many of the central concerns of this thesis: the question of medium specificity, the text's awareness of its domestic viewing context and domestic viewer, and the centrality of domestic space within the image repertoire of Gothic television. It does this in relation to the female Gothic adaptation, a programming phenomenon, primarily of the 1990s (with some earlier notable exceptions), featuring dramatisation of Gothic novels such as Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*. Like the preceding analyses, although arguably more explicitly, this chapter seeks to define a textually inscribed viewer, to theorise her relationship to the Gothic text, and to analyse the modes of address within the female Gothic adaptation which speak directly to this viewer. The feminine possessive pronoun is used consciously here to acknowledge that these are adaptations which, it will be argued, directly seek to engage with the female viewer, and which historically have a connection with female readership/viewership in their earlier incarnations (as either novels or films). Umberto Eco's notion of the model reader is useful here in introducing this approach. In his *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* (1994), building on work presented in *The Role of the Reader* (Eco, 1979), Eco discusses the ways in which the model reader is created by the author through certain textual processes, and examines how these processes incite the reader to explore a fictional work from a certain perspective. He acknowledges that, 'in a story there is always a reader, and this reader is a fundamental ingredient not only of the process of storytelling but also of the tale itself' (1994, 1), and distinguishes an understanding of

the model reader from an exploration of the empirical reader¹, arguing that the reader can be located in the very language of the literary text. In the following exploration of the female Gothic television adaptation, it will be proposed that we might also locate a model viewer by looking at a number of textual strategies which work towards addressing an assumed female viewer, drawing them into the text of the television drama. As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, there have been a number of illuminating empirical studies of the domestic viewer and the domestic viewing space of television, which have brought to light and challenged some of the key assumptions about the ways in which we watch television. However, in the context of the following analysis it will be argued that it is equally valid to make suppositions about who might be watching a piece of television (and indeed, where and how that act of viewing might be taking place) by looking to television itself, and by seeking out textual evidence, supported by archival research, for the ways in which television is inherently preoccupied with its domestic viewing context and the image of 'home', therefore addressing a domestic viewer. Situating this textual analysis in the context of archival research into the production and broadcast of these programmes goes against Eco's notion of the model reader, in that Eco has little or no interest in the empirical author (and therefore no interest in the moment of production per se). However, during this study of the female Gothic television adaptation, an understanding of intended address and the model viewer as delineated by those producing the dramas (through marketing material, press interviews, tie-in publications, and a variety of television's intertexts) will be combined with a textual exploration of viewership.

To begin this exploration, it is pertinent to evoke existing discussions and definitions of the particularities of this sub-genre of the Gothic, in both its literary and

¹ Eco defines empirical readers thus: 'empirical readers can read in many ways, and there is no law that

cinematic forms. As suggested in the first chapter of this thesis, a great deal of critical work has been done on the female Gothic novel, a sub-genre of Gothic fiction which is described in broad terms by Robert Miles as featuring narratives of 'a heroine caught between a pastoral haven and a threatening castle, sometimes in flight from a sinister patriarchal figure, sometimes in search of an absent mother, and often both together' (1994, 1). There is a degree of disagreement within the academy as to whether the 'female Gothic' refers to texts written by authors of both genders; nevertheless, Miles' necessarily general description outlines the overarching structure of the female Gothic novel as a narrative featuring a female protagonist caught up in a matrix of domestic paranoia or home centred anxiety, trapped within a decaying home by a suspicious, and/or murderous, husband. More often than not, these narratives also centre around the heroine's departure from a benign family home to the threatening marital home, and her eventual escape to independence in a home of her own.

Different critical positions (psychoanalytic, Marxist, feminist) clearly highlight different elements of these narratives. Psychoanalytic readings of the genre, such as Claire Kahane's essay 'The Gothic Mirror' (1985), or Tania Modleski's work on popular female Gothic novels (1982a), explore the female Gothic as female Oedipal narrative, mapping the progress of the novel as a *bildungsroman* whereby the psychic individuation of the heroine may be achieved. Other work on the female Gothic (cf. Ferguson-Ellis, 1989; Fleenor, 1993; Milbank, 1992), has explored the novels as either subversive/resistant texts or, alternately, as writing with a conservative ideological function, reading the Gothic heroine as a woman struggling through patriarchal oppression towards self sufficiency. In addition, work done on popular or 'pulp' female Gothic fictions of either the nineteenth (Howells (1978), Ferguson-Ellis

tells them how to read, because they often use the text as a container for their own passions, which may

(1989)), or twentieth centuries (Russ (1993), Modleski (1982a)) has combined these approaches to think about the ways in which the female Gothic novel of the popular presses centralises the domestic space as a site of anxiety, and has dealt with the act of reading as an act of catharsis, self-exploration, or masochistic identification for the female reader. This focus on the text as a site in which domestic anxieties may be 'worked through' provides the main link between this literary criticism and the following discussion of the female Gothic adaptation on television.

A number of key analyses have also been written about the female Gothic in film, particularly in relation to the woman's film of the 1940s². Diane Waldman describes the generic narrative of these films as follows:

a young inexperienced woman meets a handsome older man to whom she is alternately attracted and repelled. After a whirlwind courtship... she marries him. After returning to the ancestral mansion of one of the pair, the heroine experiences a series of bizarre and uncanny incidents, open to ambiguous interpretation, revolving around the question of whether or not the Gothic male really loves her. She begins to suspect that he may be a murderer. (1983, 29-30)

Another definition, taken from Michael Walker's essay on *Secret Beyond the Door* (Fritz Lang, US, 1947), expands on this by isolating key narrative Gothic tropes:

the heroine's point of view; - the whirlwind courtship and marriage to the hero; - the return to his family mansion, arrival at which is traumatic; - a past secret of the husband's, which causes him to behave strangely towards the heroine, and which relates to a dead wife, whom the husband may have killed; - the heroine's investigation of this secret, which

come from outside the text or which the text may arouse by chance' (1994, 8).

focuses in particular on a forbidden (locked) room, her penetration of which causes the husband to become murderous; - a jealous rival of the heroine already inside the house, who sets fire to the house at the end, seeking to kill the heroine. (1990, 18)

Both these definitions build on the key narrative elements described above in relation to the Gothic novel, those overarching structures defined by Helen Hanson as 'romance, suspicion, investigation/discovery, confrontation or confession, and resolution' (2000, 131), which closely mimic the traditional 'Bluebeard' narrative (a young woman investigates her new husband's past through an exploration of a hidden room in his castle, only to find evidence of murder or foul play). However, they expand Miles' definition to highlight what are implicitly visual characteristics, such as subjective narration (point of view) and the importance of location (the ancestral mansion). This observation is not to suggest that subjective narration and a fully realised sense of location are unimportant to literary versions of the female Gothic, or to critical examinations of this literary sub-genre (this is, indeed, not the case). However, it is noteworthy that definitions referring specifically to filmic versions of these narratives draw attention to these elements of the female Gothic, and that film, and, implicitly, television, as audio-visual media, could be seen to be differently equipped to realise characteristics of the female Gothic narrative which are inherently linked to vision and the establishment of a significant milieu or locale.

The question of subjective narration and point of view will be addressed more fully later in this chapter. However, it is the significance of the domestic space in these narratives which must remain at the forefront of the introduction of this analysis of the female Gothic on television. The importance of the home in female Gothic films, in

² For example, *Rebecca*, *Dragonwyck* (Joseph L. Mankiewicz, US, 1947), *Gaslight* (George Cukor,

the form of the dilapidated Gothic mansion, is made most clear in Mary Ann Doane's extensive analysis of the Gothic woman's film of the 1940s, in which she analyses the representations of domestic space typical to this genre and period.

The paradigmatic woman's space – the home – is yoked to dread, and to a crisis of vision. For violence is precisely what is hidden from sight...

The home is not a homogenous space – it asserts divisions, gaps, and fields within its very structure. There are places which elude the eye.

(1987a, 134)

Doane's description addresses the representation of domestic space as the site of fear within these films, and she goes on to outline the specificities of this representation (in relation to the appearance of the hidden room, and the significance of the staircase and window, for example) in an extremely insightful analysis. In addition, Doane makes the point that these films addressed an assumed female audience:

In the first half of the [1940s], due to the war and the enlistment of large numbers of young men in the armed forces, film producers assumed that cinema audiences would be predominantly female... Furthermore, there is an intensity and an aberrant quality to the '40s films which is linked to the ideological upheaval signalled by a redefinition of sexual roles and the reorganisation of the family during the war years. (ibid., 4)

Doane therefore argues that not only were these films addressed to a female audience, but also that the Gothic woman's film of the 1940s 'worked through' some of the crises and paranoias surrounding the domestic space in the 1940s. This argument, regarding the timeliness of these narratives, is also taken up by Tania Modleski, in that she goes on to note that these films 'may be seen to reflect women's fears about losing

US, 1944), and *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* (Peter Godfrey, US, 1947)

their unprecedented freedoms *and* being forced back into homes... In many of these films, the house seems to be alive with menace' (1982a, 21-22). However, what Doane fails to take into account, and what Modleski implicitly infers, but does not explicitly address, is that the cinema going, predominantly female audience had escaped the confines of this dreadful place (the home) in order to attend the cinema. Consequently, a certain amount of the frisson built up around this paranoid depiction of the home might be dispelled by its public viewing context, creating a dislocation between the domestic spaces on screen and the domestic spaces of the (presumed female) audience.

This point therefore provides a segue in to the crux of this analysis of the female Gothic adaptation on television; by bringing the narrative of female paranoia or fear back into the home, understanding television as an inherently domestic medium, the closeness between the threatened heroine and the viewer of the text is re-established or intensified. Playing on television's sense of intimacy, female Gothic fictions on this medium are re-domesticated, and subsequently emphasise the dual anxieties of the diegetic and extra-diegetic domestic spaces of television. This analysis of female Gothic television will therefore seek to outline the ways in which these dramas are inherently medium-reflexive, building on the proposal that these adaptations are eminently aware of both their domestic viewing context and the female domestic viewer. However, it is not the sole project of this chapter to argue that these dramas are somehow timely, in a similar fashion to those analyses of the woman's film of the 1940s discussed above. Although an argument could be made for the way that many of these television adaptations reflect current anxieties around women's dual independence inside and outside of the home, a central concern of post-feminist readings of television drama in the 1990s and beyond (cf. Dow, 1996), this avenue of inquiry would require greater space for consideration than is available here. The

question of anxiety and what to be frightened of within the domestic space will rather remain broader and more amorphous in this chapter, just as it does in the dramas in question, as this analysis examines the ways in which these adaptations demonstrate textually their relationship to contexts of broadcast.

The following analysis will focus on a number of drama serials and one-off dramas broadcast in the UK between the late 1970s and the turn of the century, produced by a variety of production companies: *Rebecca* (1979)³; *Rebecca* (1997); *The Woman in White* (1982)⁴; *The Woman in White* (1997); *The Haunting of Helen Walker* (aka *Turn of the Screw*); *The Turn of the Screw*; *Northanger Abbey*; *The Wyvern Mystery*. Several of these stories have also been adapted at an earlier date on British television, some within the boundaries of the anthology drama series of the 1950s and 60s⁵, and the very proliferation of these adaptations may attest to the fact that the medium is somehow inherently suited to their presentation, as well as affirming the fact that they have been continually popular with an easily identifiable (and thus in marketing/advertising terms, targetable) audience. This chapter will therefore explore these dramas in an attempt to define the particular ways in which narratives of domestic fear and entrapment appear specifically on television.

The female reader-viewer and the female Gothic

As suggested in the introduction to this chapter, the female viewer lies at the centre of television's suitability for the presentation of the female Gothic. Whilst it could not be

³ Please note that no ICT illustrations can be provided from this serial as the only existing copy is held in the National Film and Television Archive.

⁴ Please note that no ICT illustrations can be provided from this serial as the only existing copy is held in the National Film and Television Archive.

⁵ For example, *Rebecca* (1947), *Rebecca* (1954), *Woman in White* (episode of *Hour of Mystery*) (1957), *Woman in White* (1966).

suggested that these television dramas have no male viewing contingent, nor that there are not equally complex and interesting viewing pleasures for the male viewer, it is true that television takes on traditions of marketing/distributing the female Gothic text which pre-date the inception of both film and television production technologies, and which rely upon a rather 'solid' characterisation of a certain kind of female viewer.

From the end of the eighteenth century onwards, popular, inexpensive outlets for the female Gothic narrative attracted the female reader, who was thought to avidly 'devour' the serialised fictions of domestic terror and the female victim-heroine. As Alison Milbank describes,

many Gothic tales first appeared in the pages of journals like *The Lady's Magazine*. Women's periodicals also encouraged submissions from their readers and in this way a reciprocity of female reading and writing of Gothic was established. Through the circulating libraries for the middle class, and the Gothic chapbooks of the lower classes, a new generation of women readers was able to enjoy [female Gothic fictions]. (1998, 53-4)

In agreement with this characterisation, Kate Ferguson-Ellis suggests that the woman novel reader was at the epicentre of the boom in female Gothic literature, 'whose newly created leisure allowed her to make use of the circulating library and whose "placement" in the home made her a reader eagerly courted by publishers' (1989, x). In addition, Coral Ann Howells writes of the sensationalist marketing strategies of the Minerva Press (1796-1819) in attracting this voracious readership, focusing on the need for attraction and recruitment of readers through the packaging of the female Gothic novel.

Authors became very concerned with the superficial attractiveness of titles which promised more excitement than their novels could fulfil...

Titles tend to stress the bizarre, the thrilling and the horrible... Some authors were even attentive to chapter headings as a way of whetting their reader's appetites... These are all fairly cheap devices to stimulate interest but Lane [head of Minerva Libraries] knew that his readers would leaf rapidly through [the books]. (Howells 1978, 81)

Whilst Howells does not explicitly argue that the Minerva Press had a predominantly female readership, the examples of typical readers which she gives are all women: 'It is Jane Austen's world where the Isabella Thorps, Catherine Morlands and Harriet Smiths read avidly and uncritically' (ibid.). It is not entirely clear whether this characterisation of a predominantly female empirical readership is legitimate; as Alison Milbank points out, 'whether the description of the devourer of Minerva Press productions as female was accurate is debatable, as men were extensive novel readers' (1998, 54)⁶. However, rightly or wrongly, the reader of these Gothic fictions was, on the whole, characterised as female by those producing and marketing the novels, and has been assigned a certain 'voraciousness' by those commenting on the phenomenon.

Like Howells, Joanna Russ's work on popular female Gothic fiction in the twentieth century also places emphasis on the ways in which the novels of presses like Ace Books (producers of female Gothic 'pulp' fiction), are marketed and distributed:

Anywhere paperback books are sold you will find volumes whose covers seem to have evolved from the same clone: the colour scheme is predominantly blue or green, there is a frightened young woman in the foreground, in the background there is a mansion, castle, or large house with one window lit, there is usually a moon, a storm, or both, and whatever is occurring is occurring at night. (1993, 31)

Russ then goes on to argue that this standardised Gothic novel is directed precisely towards a certain kind of middle-class, female reader, quoting Terry Carr, ex-editor of Ace Books, as saying 'the basic appeal... is to women who marry guys and then begin to discover that their husbands are strangers' (ibid., 32). Subsequently, Russ spends much of her essay exploring the particular pleasures of the popular female Gothic novel for women who 'have a keen eye for food, clothes, interior décor, and middle-class hobbies (e.g. collecting sea shells, weaving, or collecting china)' (ibid. 36), concluding that 'these novels are written for women who cook, who decorate their own houses, who shop for clothing for themselves and their children – in short, for housewives' (ibid., 39). Russ is not alone her delineation of this market; Tania Modleski (1982a), in her exploration of mass produced literature for women, also characterises the reader of Ace and Fawcett novels (another producer of 'pulp' female Gothic fiction) as a married woman working through the paranoia and anxiety of married life.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, this avid readership has also extended to the (supposed) equally avid viewership of television, and the consumption of female Gothic narratives through journals, chapbooks, and 'dime-store' novels, can be read as pre-figuring television as a form of domestic consumption by the female reader/viewer, offering a private rather than public space for the reception of these (often serialised) narratives. Just as the Minerva Press saw the Gothic as a viable investment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and Ace and Fawcett Books did the same in the late twentieth century, so television companies turned to the genre, with its pre-sold audience, as a safe bet for both domestic viewing figures and international sales. It was argued in chapter two of this thesis that *Mystery and*

⁶ Indeed Milbank turns to Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey*, published in 1818, the same year as Jane

Imagination exploited the Gothic genre as simultaneously cultured and popular in order to attract viewers and critical praise, and similarly, in the 1980s and 90s, producers capitalised on a current trend for lavish heritage dramas on television, along with a certain popular taste for the Gothic amongst a particular female viewership. This unification of the culturally valuable and the popular is also reflected in the production contexts of several of the recent female Gothic adaptations (e.g. *The Wyvern Mystery*, *The Woman in White* (1997), and *Northanger Abbey*), which were made as co-productions between the BBC (the British industry's bastion of good taste and quality television) and commercial production companies from either this country (The Television Production Company) or the US (WGBH Boston, A&E Network)⁷. This form of financing has produced dramas which, whilst elevated by their status as 'quality' literary adaptation, also clearly reflect the populist/commercial roots of Gothic fiction. In light of this, it is clear that the female Gothic is produced on television as a viable commodity, easily marketable (in terms of appealing to advertisers on commercial television) and packaged (in terms of export to other countries).

Taking Carlton/Portman Production's *Rebecca* (1997) as an example of the aforementioned trend, this adaptation was an unusually lavish and expensive production. The two-part drama cost £4 million to make, and was obviously seen by its production companies as a viable investment in a pre-sold property, based on the popularity of the novel, Hitchcock's film, and the numerous earlier television adaptations (as outlined above). In a sense, by portraying *Rebecca* as a television event, Carlton/ITV attempted to lure a captive audience to its two-part adaptation.

Austen's satire on Gothic novel reading, *Northanger Abbey*, to cite the character of Scythrop who reads *Horrid Mysteries* as an example of such an avid male fan of the genre.

which was shown early in the new year (the fifth and sixth of January) at the tail-end of the special Christmas schedule. In a Carlton press release detailing the ‘greatness’ of *Rebecca*’s stars, locations, and budgets, issued as early as June the previous year in order to pique viewer interest, the producers emphasised both the event status of the adaptation and its exportability, as well as the drama’s inherent appeal to a tradition of reader-viewers:

Portman Productions executive producer Tim Buxton says: “The wealth of talent which is working together to bring this du Maurier classic to the screen is certain to create a television ‘event’ to be enjoyed by her fans, old and new, around the world.” (Carlton, 1996)

Rebecca was scheduled on consecutive nights against two of the BBC’s most popular serial dramas (*Ballykissangel* (1996-2001) and *Eastenders* (1985-)), in an aggressive competition strategy whereby ITV aimed to ‘steal’ viewers from the BBC rather than appealing to a market not catered for by the two aforementioned programmes. *Rebecca* received, on average, a 35% audience share, as opposed to *Ballykissangel*’s 45% and *Eastenders*’ 50%⁸, an audience inevitably drawn in by the drama’s intensive pre-advertising campaign (from the previous summer onwards), as well as a tie-in book which accompanied the adaptation (Tiballs, 1996) and widespread press coverage. Tiballs’ book offered a series of informative contexts, including information on du Maurier, profiles of particular members of the cast, location information, and an illustrated chapter entitled ‘Dressing for the Part’ describing the costumes used in the adaptation. With its emphasis on the details of dressing up and home furnishings, the

⁷ This trend in co-production and the use of domestic independent programme-makers can, of course, be related to the 1990 Broadcasting Act in Britain, which stated that 25% of qualifying programmes (broadly speaking, non-news), should be produced by independent production companies.

⁸ Based on AGB Programme Ratings, (week ending 5/1/97, p.20, and week ending 12/1/97, p.2)

tie-in book clearly appeals to an assumed female viewer's 'cultural competences'⁹, with the reader-viewer figure evoked in Carlton's press release (discussed above) being explicitly referred to as women or girls within the tie-in book. For example, director Jim O'Brien betrays this assumption in the following statement in Tiballs' book: '[a] lot of girls read the story and they can treat it as being entirely innocent if they want to, but older women can see what du Maurier is getting at' (1996, 54).

In fact, the marketing campaign for *Rebecca* seems quite restrained compared to that of Wilkie Collins' novel *The Woman in White*, published in August 1860, which was accompanied by a whole range of tie-ins:

[*The Woman in White* marked] the marketplace's power to transform both text and author into a seemingly endless series of commodities...

[Collins'] best-selling novel was reproduced as *Woman in White* perfume, bonnets and quadrilles... It was, however, the novel's very status as commodity – not merely as a best seller but as a rage, a sensation, a stimulating food to be “devoured” in one sitting – that contributed to its mixed reception as a work of art. (Heller 1992, 3)

However, what is strikingly similar between the campaign surrounding Collins' novel and the marketing of the 1997 adaptation of du Maurier's *Rebecca* is their address to the female reader/viewer as both an avid fan of the genre, and as a consumer of 'lifestyle' goods.

This continual conflation of the female reader, viewer, and consumer therefore brings us back to the question of television's inherent suitability for the presentation of female Gothic narratives. As in the above instance (the marketing of *Rebecca* (1997)), the programme makers clearly relied upon a continuum of female

⁹ A term used by Charlotte Brunsdon (1981) in relation to female viewers of the UK soap, *Crossroads*.

readership/viewership, implicitly occurring within the domestic rather than public sphere, to sell their product. In the case of *Rebecca* (1997) at least, Carlton and the programme's producers appealed to this female reader-viewer through the seductiveness of the discourse of 'lifestyle' (ideal homes, fantasy fashions, etc), precisely the pleasures of the popular female Gothic novel which Joanna Russ isolates (1993), and it is perhaps no coincidence that many of these adaptations reappeared on television at precisely the same time as an explosion in lifestyle programming and makeover shows (see Brunsdon et al, 2001). The irony of this congruence is that *Rebecca*, as with the other female Gothic narratives, also implicitly critiques the representation of the domestic space as ideal home, and in fact expresses a certain anxiety around the image of the perfected woman/wife, an idea which will be discussed in the following section of this chapter.

Generic identity and the subversion of perfection

The tension between idealised depictions of heterosexual love/domestic bliss and the horrific realities of home life as experienced by the Gothic heroine is made evident in that these adaptations introduce the tropes of two genres readily associated with domestic perfection, the romance and the heritage drama, in order to provide their narratives with a keen sense of conflict between fantasy and actuality. Within the conventions of the female Gothic narrative, some sense of happiness or equilibrium must be established at the beginning of the drama, in order that the heroine's removal to her husband's/brother-in-law's/employer's Gothic pile be marked as a disruptive and unwelcome event in her life. Therefore, before this removal can occur, an innocent, benign romance (not necessarily with the future suitor/captor) must take

place, utilising the generic dramatic/filmic tropes of the heterosexual romance: in *Rebecca*, this romance is between the young girl and Maxim de Winter; in *The Woman in White* the innocent romance is begun (and subsequently thwarted until the conclusion of the drama) between Laura and her art tutor, Walter Hartright. These moments in the narrative, utilising stock visual tropes of the romance, feature the heavy use of soft lighting and soft focus when the heroine or her potential suitor is in shot, and the courtship montage sequence, whereby potential lovers are seen enjoying themselves together in a variety of locations and activities. In both the 1979 and 1997 versions of *Rebecca* for example, the courtship between the young girl (Joanna David (1979) and Emilia Fox (1997)) and Maxim de Winter (Jeremy Brett (1979) and Charles Dance (1997)) is represented by a montage sequence, without diegetic sound but enhanced by a soaring orchestral score, dominated by violins, as they travel round Monte Carlo. During these sequences, the facial close-up is privileged in order to convey the intensity of their developing love for one another, coupled by long shots of the openness of the surrounding Monte Carlo countryside, which offer a stark contrast to the confinement of the domestic space later in the drama. Indeed, both these adaptations explicitly address the heroine's own desire for this 'romantic montage', through the dialogue of a speech delivered by Maxim after his wedding proposal. For example, in *Rebecca* (1979), Maxim states

Oh my poor darling, I'm sure this isn't your idea of a proposal. We should be in a conservatory, hmm? You in a white dress, with a flower in your hand and a violin playing a waltz in the distance. And I should make love to you under a palm tree, hmm? Never mind. I'll take you to Venice on honeymoon and we'll hold hands in a gondola.

Expressed in this rather sardonic speech is an awareness of the young girl's received ideas of 'the romantic', both in terms of the ideal locations of the montage sequence which Maxim depicts here, and even in her need for a soaring soundtrack (the 'violin playing a waltz'). The female Gothic adaptation thus plays with this audio-visual version of perfect romance, only to undercut it with the heroine's contrasting experience of married life.

However, the female Gothic television adaptation plays on its identity as a heritage drama even more strikingly. In some senses these dramas are heritage texts, in that they are literary adaptations which pay a great deal of attention to creating an era-specific milieu in which the events of the drama will take place. However, as argued in the second chapter of this thesis, the Gothic narrative provides heritage texts with a difference, which might be seen as anti-nostalgic or 'feel bad' heritage texts. In relation to the female Gothic, the heritage drama's association with a female audience is significant; as Claire Monk and others have argued, the heritage text may be read as generically identified as 'feminine':

If we take the "woman's film" characteristics [the diegetic and spectatorial privileging of female point-of-view structures, and thematic concerns designated as "feminine" within patriarchal culture]... as a starting point, and consider also the conventional cultural designation of talk, costume/fashion and the domestic sphere as areas of female competence, it is clear that a considerable number of the best-known heritage films [and television] qualify as "feminine" texts on the thematic, diegetic and aesthetic levels. (Monk, 1996)

Monk's representation of the heritage text as feminine thus speaks to the fact that the cycle has a certain association with idealised notions of feminine self-presentation and

domesticity, situated in a historical setting. One of the most popular and successful recent heritage dramas on television, *Pride and Prejudice*, is a good example of Monk's characterisation of the heritage text, particularly with regard to a display of the fine detail of heritage costume and location, and the publicity surrounding this adaptation clearly took this configuration of the ideal home/woman to heart. Weekly coverage of this adaptation in the *Radio Times* focused on these elements of the drama: Kate Lock's article, 'Lifting the Skirts on *Pride and Prejudice*' (1995) included an interview with Dinah Collin, costume designer (along with reproduced costume notes and sketches), Gerry Scott, production designer (with design sketches and swatches of wallpaper and fabric) and details of dance styles from the serial; the following week's *Radio Times* even offered instructions for the reader to throw a *Pride and Prejudice* dinner party, complete with menu guide and recipes (Dodd, 1995).

However, although the female Gothic adaptations also carefully construct 'heritage' spaces and characters, through an attention to the detail of 'authentic' mise-en-scène, the argument can be made that female Gothic television adaptations act as a reaction to more benign forms of the heritage text (such as *Pride and Prejudice*), in that they expose the underside of domestic life in the past, rather than simply focusing on its glossy surfaces. Additionally, if one of the most relentless narratives on television in the 1990s, in both its fictional and non-fictional forms, is of home (and, implicitly, self) improvement (as argued in relation to 'lifestyle' programmes by Rachel Moseley (2000a)), one could almost conclude that the female Gothic also provides an antidote to more general narratives of the 'ideal home' on television and their very different configuration of domestic space. This is similar to an argument made by Diane Waldman (1983, 36) in relation to the contrast between the

representation of the home in female Gothic films of the forties and other contemporaneous 'family films', such as *Meet Me in St. Louis* (Vincente Minnelli, US, 1944)¹⁰ and *I Remember Mama* (George Stevens, US, 1948). Similarly Kate Ferguson-Ellis has suggested that, from the end of the eighteenth century onwards, a preoccupation with the idealised domestic space gave rise to the female Gothic novel: '[out of this] preoccupation with the ideal home, a distinct subcategory of the English novel, the Gothic, began to make its appearance on publisher's lists and on the shelves of circulating libraries' (1989, ix). Therefore, heritage texts on television, such as *Pride and Prejudice*, clearly provide a striking counter-point to the female Gothic adaptation, and in fact may have inspired their production in a bid to expose the other side of family life in the past.

Not only can the traditional heritage drama be seen to prompt the very existence of the female Gothic on television, but it also lends its particular aesthetic characteristics to these adaptations, in order that they may be changed or subverted in some way. Taking the exterior long shot of the key location (the stately home) as a particularly striking instance of this textual borrowing, we can observe the ways in which a characteristic shot of the heritage drama is utilised by the female Gothic drama on television, with a number of key differences. The long shot of the approach to the stately home has already been discussed in the second chapter of this thesis (in relation to the opening sequence of the *Ghost Story for Christmas* episode, 'Lost Hearts'), and, as before, it may be useful here to offer the approach to Netherfield Hall in *Pride and Prejudice* as an example of the traditional handling of this space within the heritage drama (see fig. 3.1).

¹⁰ In fact, *Meet Me in St. Louis* contains its own reference to the Gothic style, in the Halloween sequence.



Fig. 3.1: Introducing the heritage home **Fig. 3.2: Approaching the Gothic home**

In the opening of *Pride and Prejudice*, this extreme long shot of the hall, which is taken from behind Mr. Bingley (Crispin Bonham-Carter) and Mr. Darcy (Colin Firth) as they survey the house before Mr. Bingley decides to rent it, can be seen as both a representation of the splendour of upper class living and an idyllic image of potential domestic bliss (achieved in the conclusion of the serial through the Bennett sisters' marriages). The qualities of sunny light and soft focus here serve to frame the house's appearance as a space of hope, and expresses the possibility of the Bennets' social climbing rather than expressing the dread of domestic space which is established from this type of shot in the female Gothic adaptation.

In the 1997 BBC version of *The Woman in White* for example, this shot of the house is also employed as Marian (Tara Fitzgerald) approaches Glyde for the first time, and is taken from the heroine's point of view as she contemplates her future; in this sequence, explicitly taken from Marian's subjective position, her accompanying voice-over is given as the camera remains in tight close-up on her face, implicitly expressing the fear/dread attached to the house (see fig. 3.2). Her mind's voice states 'I begged Laura to forget all my doubts. It had been agreed I would join her as soon as the honeymoon was over and how strange it seems now to think that I travelled that

long road in hope'. During this dialogue, a cut is made on the words 'the honeymoon was over' to an extreme long shot of the house (see fig. 3.3), thus bringing the house into view in relation to a metaphorical cliché for the end of initial happiness ('the honeymoon is over'). This dialogue, along with an ominous extra-diegetic soundtrack of strings and French horns, thus undercuts the sunny exterior shot of the house and, implicitly, Marian's belief that she is travelling towards hope, which significantly alters the shot as it would have been presented in the non-Gothic heritage text.



Fig. 3.3: Establishing shot of Glyde Hall

The Wyvern Mystery also alters the generic approach to the heritage location through the distinct uneasiness attached to domestic spaces within the female Gothic narrative. In this drama, the approach sequence introduces the audience to a degraded version of the heritage location, and thus demarcates the space as one of potential collapse or degradation for Alice (Naomi Watts), rather than for potential self-improvement (as in *Pride and Prejudice*, above). Carwell, the house in question, looms into the long shot not surrounded by the sunlit, polished grandeur of Netherfield (*Pride and Prejudice*), or even Glyde (*The Woman in White* (1997)), but rather is covered in dead vines and approached by a muddy, weed-ridden track (see fig. 3.4); once again, this establishing

shot is cross-cut with a close-up of the heroine's face, thus strengthening the visual link between the protagonist and this location.



Fig. 3.4: Approaching Carwell



Fig. 3.5: Lack of heritage décor

Once inside the house, long shots, tracks, pans, and zooms serve only to emphasise the degraded emptiness of the house, rather than to allow an elaborate display of heritage detail more usual to the heritage adaptation (as argued in Higson, 1993). For example, in *The Wyvern Mystery*, a static, slightly canted, long shot of Alice and her new husband, Charlie (Iain Glen) climbing the stairs in their new home, accompanied by their housekeeper, Mrs. Tarnley's (Ellie Haddington) statement 'I've made a list of the contents of the house Ma'am – there's not so much I'm afraid', emphasises the emptiness and distinct lack of decoration within this particular stately home (see fig. 3.5). Whereas Higson has argued that camera movement in the traditional heritage drama places the ornamented domestic space on display, fetishising the mise-en-scène of the domestic space (1993, 112-113), this interior shot in *Carwell* shows only the bad fortune which is attached to domestic spaces within the female Gothic adaptation.

Representations of domestic space: the decline of the ideal home?

Moving on from the discussion of the female Gothic adaptation as a heritage text, it is necessary to outline and explore in more detail the ways in which the domestic space appears within these dramas. The overarching narrative structure of all of these dramas is found in the heroine's removal from a place of safety to the threatening location of her husband/employer's familial mansion, with many of the narratives finding resolution in her removal from this dangerous domestic space, and subsequent move into her own home (with the exception of *Rebecca*, where the young Mrs. de Winter moves into a new house *with* her husband, albeit in a disabled, and therefore emasculated, state). This analysis will therefore illustrate the notion that these programmes 'play upon' certain anxieties focused on and experienced by women in the marital home through an investigation of the threatening, cage-like, labyrinthine, and, ultimately, 'un-homely' domestic spaces of these adaptations.

As well as offering an idealised representation of heterosexual romance, as argued above in relation to the utilisation of narrative techniques from the traditional television romance, the female Gothic narrative frequently begins with a representation of idealised (most usually pastoral) domesticity. This configuration of the house, often the parental home, offers a stark contrast to the house which the heroine will eventually move into (which is often far more grand and imposing, but which lacks a sense of homely security). For example, the opening of *The Wyvern Mystery* finds the young Alice ensconced in her father's house, a modest image of domestic bliss (it is safe, warm, and lit with mellow light), reading from a book of fairy stories, a present from her father. During this sequence of idyllic tranquillity, Alice's adult voice-over states 'When I was very young, my father held me tightly and

told me of witches and goblins; if only I had known how close they were'. Aside from the significance of positing Alice as a diegetic consumer of Gothic fictions (which will be discussed below), this sequence sets up a certain tension by offering an image of domestic perfection, and implicitly addressing its impossibility through Alice's suggestion that threat/terror ('witches and goblins') were close at hand (i.e. also contained within the home). Within this sequence, initially shot in soft focus and lit brightly to evoke a feeling of warmth and safety, the mobile camera visually pre-figures Alice's impending entrapment (first in Wyvern Hall, the home of her benefactor, and later in Carwell, the home of her husband), by constantly reframing her through a number of diegetic frames or bars (the backs of chairs, the square panes of the window, etc.) (see figs. 3.6–3.7).



Fig. 3.6: The diegetic frame



Fig. 3.7: The diegetic frame

However, as the opening sequence progresses, the death of Alice's father is graphically portrayed through the image of his clammy, blood spattered face (he dies of consumption), and the warm glow of the family home is replaced by the stark blue light of winter in the moment in which Alice is removed from the house by her benefactor and enters Wyvern Hall. As a result, even within these short sequences of

safety for the heroine, anxiety is built around leaving home and the sanctity of domestic spaces, here through voice-over dialogue, diegetic framing, and an obvious change in lighting which radically alters the representation of the home.



Fig. 3.8: Shattering the ideal home

The Woman in White (1997) also expressively represents the shattering of an idyllic home through a symbolic shot within the space of Marian's opening flashback. At the very beginning of the drama, as Marian's voice-over is heard to say 'just as normally it is the criminals who are locked up, rather than the victims. But then nothing was normal about what happened to us, except perhaps the beginning', a cut is made from a medium close-up of her face to an extreme close-up, in slow motion, of a mallet hitting a croquet ball. Following this shot, a cut is made to a slow-motion medium-long shot of Marian and Laura (Justine Waddell) running toward the ball (shot through yellow filters to give the dream-like appearance of a memory sequence), then to a close-up, low, tracking shot which follows the ball along the lawn. Following these establishing shots, a cut is made to a low position inside a greenhouse, just as the croquet ball smashes through a pane of glass (see fig. 3.8); here, the extreme depth of field and the staged composition of this shot mean that the two girls are framed within

the shattered window frame, thus allowing this relatively innocuous shot to act as an augur for their future entrapment within another, far more dangerous, 'frame' (Glyde Hall). As such, this flashback sequence both portrays the pastoral domestic idyll (the hazy, sunny country garden which Marian refers to in her voice-over as 'normal'), and its impending disruption (through the symbolic shattering of the glass, and the jagged shards of glass which surround the small bodies of the two women in the background).

However, the homes in which the majority of the narrative action takes place, implicitly countered by these representations of idyllic homes at the start of the drama, most specifically speak to this sense of domestic anxiety present in the female Gothic adaptation. As the Gothic victim heroine moves into her new abode (Laura and Marian to Glyde in *The Woman in White*, Miss/Helen Walker to her employer's house in *The Turn of the Screw*, the new Mrs. de Winter to Manderley in *Rebecca*, Alice to Wyvern and then to Carwell in *The Wyvern Mystery*), it is immediately implied that she is more a newly interred prisoner than the returning lady of the house. Indeed, the domestic space is rarely spoken of as a house or home from the moment of the young woman's arrival, but rather as a space of entrapment or confinement (as in episode three of *The Woman in White* (1982), where Marian (Diana Quick) asks her sister's husband 'I am to assume that your wife's room is a prison?' and later, in episode four, where Sir Percival (John Shrapnel) leaves Glyde, bellowing 'I am not spending another minute in this dungeon'). This sentiment is exemplified in an impassioned speech by Marian in *The Woman in White* (1982), who, as a counterpoint to her sister's compliance in the state of marriage as imprisonment, acts as stridently feminist voice of resistance throughout the narrative: 'Men – they're enemies of our peace and innocence. They take us to their body and soul, and fasten us helpless to their lives like dogs in kennels'. This dialogue, implying forced rather than protective enclosure within the

home, is also reflected in the mise-en-scène of these dramas, which explicitly reiterates the imagery of the cage/prison within the domestic location. For example, in *The Woman in White* (1997), the space surrounding Laura is almost always depicted as cage-like, even before she enters her husband's Gothic pile.



Fig. 3.9: Laura in a cage



Fig. 3.10: Laura in a cage



Fig. 3.11: Alice in a cage

When Laura is shown for the first time in her uncle's home, she appears at a window against and behind a number of objects which reflect the cage/bar motif (the panelling, chair back, window panes, etc. - see fig. 3.9), as well as literally standing in front of a cage (an ornate birdcage), an object which symbolises her potential position as prisoner in her own house. This visual symbolism of Laura's eventual predicament is

given in anticipation of her future: indeed, the image of bars against Laura's body will eventually be repeated at the end of the drama when Laura is rediscovered, imprisoned in an asylum in the place of her half sister, Anne Catherick (see fig. 3.10). The use of bar shadows is a recurring visual motif in the female Gothic and is repeated elsewhere in the cycle (as in the medium-long shots of Alice lying alone in her marital bed at Carwell in *The Wyvern Mystery* - see fig. 3.11), thus building up a recognisable image repertoire of the female Gothic on television which acknowledges the imprisoning nature of domestic space in these dramas.

In her analysis of female Gothic cinema, Mary Ann Doane isolates the window as an important space within the mise-en-scène of the threatening home.

The window has special import in terms of the social and symbolic positioning of the woman – the window is the interface between inside and outside, the feminine space of the family and reproduction and the masculine space of production. (Doane 1987b, 288)

Doane's delineation of the window is also pertinent to these adaptations of the female Gothic on television, particularly in its ambivalent position as an interstice, a go-between space between the house and the outside world, which may be read as either benign (providing access for the entrapped heroine to the outside world), or, in fact, malignant (withholding her from that world, or somehow representing her anxiety about entering the outside world)¹¹. In both versions of *Rebecca* for example, it is the window within Rebecca's room which acts as a space of crisis for the new Mrs. de Winter: it draws her towards an exploration of the 'other side' of the house, and is ultimately the space where Mrs. Danvers is most threatening, goading the young woman to jump out of the window and kill herself.

One could perhaps view this analogy of the window as fearful interstice between the domestic space and the outside world as an extension of a wider metaphor relating to the television screen, in that it may also be seen as a 'window to the world' within the domestic viewing context. By bringing the potential dangers of domestic space into the domestic viewing context, the programme makers of the female Gothic drama allow the female viewer a particularly fearful view of another domestic space, thus affording the television screen both the properties of the window (a view of 'outside' the viewing space/home) and the mirror (a reflection of the viewing space/home). This uncanny 'doubling' of domestic space is also reflected in the presence of a number of objects representing houses within the diegetic domestic space of these narratives (dolls houses, ornaments, paintings, etc.); for instance, at Mrs. Catherick's (Pauline Jameson) house in *The Woman in White* (1982), the most prominent ornament is a large Gothic-style house underneath a glass dome, a literal representation of the captive house and a diegetic representation of the Gothic house as viewing-object. This kind of reading (television as simultaneous window and mirror) must be taken with caution as it clearly relies on a metaphorical reading of television broadcast and reception, and, as Jostein Gripsrud notes, 'while a metaphor is rarely entirely false, it does give prominence to some features of the phenomenon in question, and leaves others in the shade. This is why all metaphors [in television studies] should be regarded with a degree of suspicion' (1998, 17). However, the image of the 'doubled' houses of the female Gothic (the house on screen and the house in which the drama is being viewed), and the points of connection between these two spaces, will be explored further in the concluding section of this chapter.

¹¹ This is an idea that is also explored in Julianne Pidduck's article on Jane Austen adaptations (1998), though Pidduck does not discuss the Gothic genre.

In addition to reading the window as an interstitial space, imbued with a certain degree of danger, the garden of the threatened/threatening home is also a significant but ambivalent space within the female Gothic adaptation. The grounds of the house become, in a sense, the location in which the heroines of these dramas struggle for their freedom from the tyrannies of marriage. In the garden, Marian and Laura attempt (unsuccessfully) to break through the wooded boundaries to reach the comparative safety of the outside world (*The Woman in White* (both versions)), Alice runs from the advances of her lecherous benefactor, only to run into the equally dangerous arms of her future husband (*The Wyvern Mystery*), and the young governess struggles with the sexually threatening ghosts of her new home (*The Turn of the Screw* and *The Haunting of Helen Walker*). Again, the ambivalence of this interstitial space is found in the close proximity between protection and entrapment in these dramas. At key moments of conflict, as in the moment when Marian discovers part of Percival (James Wilby) and Fosco's (Simon Callow) plot to do away with the two sisters in *The Woman in White* (1997), the heroine is positioned on the very boundaries of the house in a position of acute danger. Similarly, in *The Wyvern Mystery* Alice is positioned on the balcony (both inside and outside) when she overhears parts of a conspiracy between her husband and his brother, her position at the edges of the house representing the fact that she is unable to move beyond the confines of the domestic grounds, and therefore is excluded from hearing any 'worldly' news/secrets which might allay her fears about her position within her new home. Therefore, as the grounds of the home are neither inside nor outside the bounds of the domestic space, they can provide no real sense of safety or escape: they merely act to reemphasise the borders that the wife/domestic prisoner may not cross.

The particular prison-like qualities of the domestic space within the television adaptations of female Gothic narratives are also reflected in costume in *The Woman in White* (1997); the overarching analogy between the home and the space of entrapment is reiterated precisely at the moment in which Laura becomes a domestic prisoner (i.e. on her wedding day). The notion of marriage as imprisonment is resonant in the sequence in which Laura is tied into her cage-like wedding dress by a bevy of housemaids (see figs. 3.12-3.14), a sequence which departs from the more usual representation of the wedding day montage primarily through the lack of happy dialogue, the use of mournful, foreboding music on the extra-diegetic soundtrack, and the low-key lighting which casts dark shadows across the bride's face.



Fig. 3.12: Tied into the wedding dress



Fig. 3.13: Tied into the wedding dress



Fig. 3.14: Tied into the wedding dress

During this sequence, a series of near-static, dialogue-less shots which are darkly lit by dusty light, Laura is completely, unnaturally still and unsmiling, almost mannequin-like as the maids work around her to tie her in to her dress. On the third shot of this activity, a cut is made to directly above the bride, showing her surrounded at all sides by the domestic servants (see fig. 3.14). This scene can be read as a visualisation of Laura's impending fate immediately following her wedding, where she is imprisoned in her new marital home through the collusion of the female housekeeper (who, it is implied, is also her husband's lover) and her serving girls. Analyses of female Gothic literary fiction, most notably Elaine Showalter's discussion of *Jane Eyre* in her wide-ranging study of British women's writing (1977, 33), have drawn close parallels between the heroine's body and the domestic space; here the representation of Laura's body becoming surrounded by a cage (the stiff, corseted wedding dress) is in keeping with this closeness. As her body becomes stiffened and encased in the swathes of material which make up her wedding dress, a visual/spatial analogy is made between the 'trappings' of the wedding and the entrapment of the marital home.

Domestic space is not only configured as a prison within the female Gothic narrative, however; the family horrors/secrets which pre-figure the heroine's imprisonment are also writ large upon the domestic space itself throughout many of these dramas. As suggested in the introduction of this chapter, the female Gothic narrative often centres around a hidden family secret which necessitates the heroine's unpleasant position in her new home; these secrets make up the back-story of the drama, and the heroine's need to understand/uncover them propels the narrative. They include covered-up murders/deaths (*Rebecca*, *The Woman in White*, *The Wyvern Mystery*, *Turn of the Screw*), the unknown substitution of two characters (Laura and

Anne in *The Woman in White*, the two babies in *The Wyvern Mystery*), or a previous failed/unhappy marriage (*Rebecca*, *The Wyvern Mystery*).

The most potent image portraying these destructive secrets within the houses of the female Gothic drama on television is that of the shrouded room. This space, symbolic of the hidden past of the Gothic household, is a room in which all furniture and ornamentation has been covered with dust cloths, ostensibly to protect these objects from the neglect of the previous owner's prolonged absence. In *Rebecca* (1979), the new Mrs. de Winter discovers a series of shrouded rooms as she explores the west wing for the first time, the space in the house which is marked as 'belonging to' the previous Mrs. de Winter; here the dust-sheets not only provide a visual metaphor for her husband's unknown past, but they also tellingly cover Rebecca's comparative panache for home-décor, which, we are later informed, was a 'cover' for her lack of love/desire for her husband.



Fig. 3.15: The shrouded room

Both the 1982 and 1997 television adaptations of *The Woman in White* also feature a scene which takes place in a shrouded room, shortly after the newly married couple return to Glyde. In the 1997 version, for example, Marian confronts her

brother-in-law about her sister's strange, withdrawn behaviour in a shrouded room: as Marian enters through a dark doorway, the camera pans left to follow her movement towards Sir Percival, revealing, in a wide and temporally long shot, a large room full of furniture and paintings covered in dust sheets (see fig. 3.15). Surrounded by concealed tables and chairs, and underneath a covered painting (presumably a family portrait, in pride of place, above the fire), Sir Percival is seen in the extreme background of the shot; the subsequent sequence exposes the fact that Sir Percival is looking through legal documents, signifying his drive to gain control of Laura's money at all costs. It is entirely apt that Marian's confrontation of her brother-in-law occurs within this setting, as the surrounding *mise-en-scène* eloquently communicates the dangerous secrets which are inferred within the scene: Percival's abuse of Laura, and his plot to render his new wife powerless which leads to Laura's false imprisonment and the death of Anne Catherick (Susan Vidler). The covered furniture and family portraits thus act as a visualisation of the hidden secrets contained within the domestic space.

In relation to the female Gothic adaptation's generic identity, the image of the shrouded room has further impact, in that it also denies one of the central pleasures of the heritage text, as well as acting as a visual metaphor for the family secrets and a hidden past. By covering the furnishings/décor of the central heritage location (the stately, ancestral home), the female Gothic drama denies the visual pleasure of the viewer's gaze on the detail of heritage set dressing in these 'loaded' moments. In such sequences as Marian's confrontation of Percival regarding her sister's apparent unhappiness within her new marital home, the surface glamour or lure of the domestic space is hidden or rejected at precisely the moment in which the question of idyllic domesticity is challenged. Instead, what the viewer is shown are traces or blank spaces

where these markers of the heritage 'ideal home' would have appeared within the domestic location, visualising a lack rather than a sense of opulence within the mise-en-scène of the television adaptation.

The ultimate hidden secret present in the female Gothic adaptation is that of domestic violence, however. The discovery of child abuse and/or spousal brutality is the subtext of many of these female Gothic adaptations, particularly those made within the last decade. In these dramas, the implied presence of domestic violence is rendered explicit throughout the course of the narrative, thus offering 'glimpses' into the underside of the familial pasts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Whilst the introduction of this chapter stated that this analysis would not seek to dwell on the question of the female Gothic adaptation's timeliness, it does appear as if these texts work through some of the current anxieties surrounding the high media profile of issues such as domestic violence/murder and retrospective investigations into child abuse in the 1990s. Tania Modleski has argued, in fact, that the female Gothic novel allows for this very kind of displacement of contemporary fears surrounding the home onto a fictional text, a text which must necessarily be set in a distant place and time.

Because [female Gothic] novels so radically displace reality by putting the action into distant times and strange and ghostly lands, they are uniquely equipped to become a site for the displacement of repressed wishes and fears. In other words, Gothics can present us with the frighteningly familiar precisely because they make the familiar strange... Thus set in a remote place, in a faraway time, the female Gothic... expresses women's most intimate fears, or, more precisely, their fears about intimacy – about the exceedingly private, even claustrophobic nature of their existence. (1982a, 20)

This argument, that the female Gothic narrative set in the past provides a ‘safe’, displaced space for the exploration of, in Modleski’s terms, the repressed fears of women, would offer some explanation for the presence of these narratives within recent broadcasting schedules.

However, an alternate approach to the presence of domestic violence within the heritage text sees this kind of narrative as far more disruptive than Modleski’s account suggests. In *The Woman in White* (1997), the reference to domestic violence is writ large across the drama, at no point more so than during the sequence in which Laura’s bruises from her husband’s violent abuse are revealed to her sister, Marian. The close up shots, which show Laura peeling back the shoulder of her lacy gown contain added ‘shock value’ when exposing dark welts set against the lace of eighteenth century period costume, within the heritage setting (see fig. 3.16).



Fig. 3.16: The marks of domestic abuse

Contrary to Modleski’s argument, and in line with previous discussions within this thesis of the ways in which the female Gothic adaptation undercuts the visual pleasure of the heritage text, this combination of period costume with the marks of abuse creates a disruptive frisson within the wider television genre of the literary adaptation,

marking a moment in which the safety of the past is challenged. Rather than reading the female Gothic narrative as a safe, displaced venue for the exploration of contemporary fears then, one could in fact argue that contemporary fears explode into the space of the heritage text at moments such as this, thus again refuting a depiction of the past as a place of domestic harmony, free from the threat of extreme violence.

It is the figure of the ‘other woman’ within the female Gothic narrative who most obviously embodies the gruesome past of the home, and it is her position within the domestic spaces constructed in these adaptations which most tellingly attests to the heroine’s potential fate. This figure, whose presence haunts the house (if she is not actually still present within the house), is clearly delineated as the protagonist’s predecessor, whether as an ex wife/lover (Rebecca in *Rebecca*, Vrau in *The Wyvern Mystery*, Anne Catherick in *The Woman in White*) or as a past employee, who held the same position as the heroine (as with Miss Jessel in *Turn of the Screw*), and is implicitly represented as an image of domestic failure throughout the narrative. This representation of failure distinctly plays upon the wider fears of the female Gothic; not only do these adaptations explicitly address the desire for, and the impossibility of, creating the ideal home, but they also explore the heroine’s anxious attempts to become the perfect wife/lover/housekeeper within the domestic realm.

Earlier critical discussions of female Gothic literature have focused on the importance of this figure in relation to the central female protagonist. Literary theorists engaging in psychoanalytic readings of these texts, for example, have highlighted her position as a potential doppelgänger for the heroine, embodying the abject or unacceptable aspects of her own persona (rage, desire, independence, etc.): this approach is typified by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), which reads the figure of Bertha Mason in *Jane Eyre* as a physical

manifestation of Jane's rage against, and burgeoning desire for, Mr. Rochester. Coming out of this reading of the other woman as the heroine's double, analyses exploring the female Gothic as a female Oedipal narrative have also asserted that the other woman acts as a textual stand-in for the absent mother whom the heroine fears becoming, as she also struggles to become an adult woman/successful wife (the process of individuation). As Julieann Fleenor states, 'the conflict at the heart of the female Gothic [is] the conflict with the all powerful, devouring mother. This maternal figure is also a double, a twin perhaps, to the woman herself' (1993, 16). Tania Modleski expands on this in her analysis which engages in the terms of the female Oedipal conflict, by delineating the heroine's masochistic identification with the other woman/pseudo-mother figure:

[T]he heroine has the uncanny sense that the past is repeating itself through her. Usually she feels a strong identification with a woman from either the recent or remote past who in almost every case has died a mysterious and perhaps violent or gruesome death. (1982a, 69)

In Modleski's terms (as with Fleenor, Russ (1993), and Kahane (1985)), this strong sense of identification leads to a depiction of the other woman as a fearful/undesirable version of the heroine herself, through the image of the bad mother.

Whilst this thesis does not attempt to offer a psychoanalytic reading of the female Gothic narrative, and a discussion of the female Gothic as female Oedipal drama would, at this point in the analysis, detract from the matter at hand, the notion of the other woman as bad mother is persuasive. However, the female Gothic television adaptation more frequently represents the other woman not as an unsuccessful or abject mother, but more obviously as a failed or undesirable wife, a figure whose unsuccessful position within the featured domestic space pre-figures the

heroine's own struggles to negotiate her position within her new husband's (or, in the case of *Turn of the Screw*, employer's) home. As such, the representation of the 'other woman' in these adaptations is not so much bound up in questions of the heroine's potential individuation, as in her desire to 'do well' as the new 'lady of the house'. As a counterpoint to the heroine's designs on domestic perfection and marital bliss, traces of the other woman regularly appear throughout the narrative, as she acts as a constant reminder of the impossibility of happiness/fulfilment within the bounds of the husband's threatening familial mansion. It is these appearances, particularly in relation to the configuration of domestic space within these adaptations, which the following analysis will consider.

The other woman's image in the female Gothic television drama is often not clearly defined. When she appears throughout the course of the narrative, she is either fleetingly seen (as in *The Haunting of Helen Walker* and *Turn of the Screw*), in short sequences or brief shots which are in keeping with the 'just glimpsed' suggestion of earlier types of Gothic television (as described in chapter two of this thesis), or she is introduced through a number of close-ups of isolated fragments of her body, rather than through a more usual character-establishing medium-long shot. In these moments, the close-up acts as a kind of metonym, a symbolic representation of the heroine's undesirable predecessor.

In both the 1979 and 1997 versions of *Rebecca*, the latter technique is used to introduce the eponymous anti-heroine of the drama: Rebecca in *Rebecca* (1979) appears as a single hand, reaching out of the sea during a subjective montage from the new Mrs. de Winter's point-of-view, whereas Rebecca (Lucy Cohu) in *Rebecca* (1997) appears as a number of body parts, including a pair of eyes in the drama's title sequence (see fig. 3.17), and then a series of images in the new Mrs. de Winter's

imagined flashback as her husband describes the events leading up to his first wife's death, firstly during an argument on the cliff at Monte Carlo, and secondly in the boathouse just before Rebecca is murdered (see figs. 3.18-3.21).



Fig. 3.17: Rebecca in the title sequence



Fig. 3.18: Rebecca on the cliff

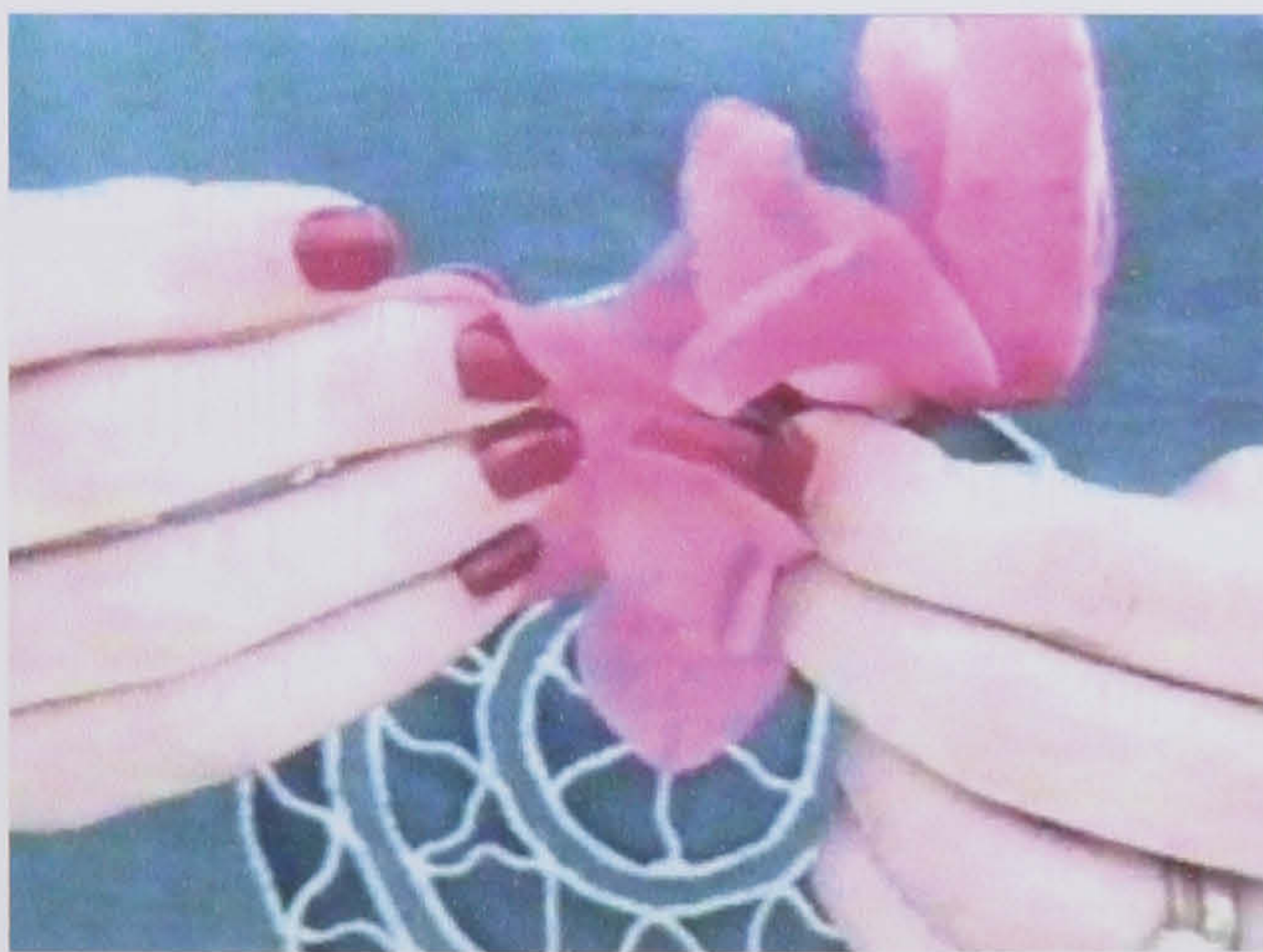


Fig. 3.19: Rebecca on the cliff

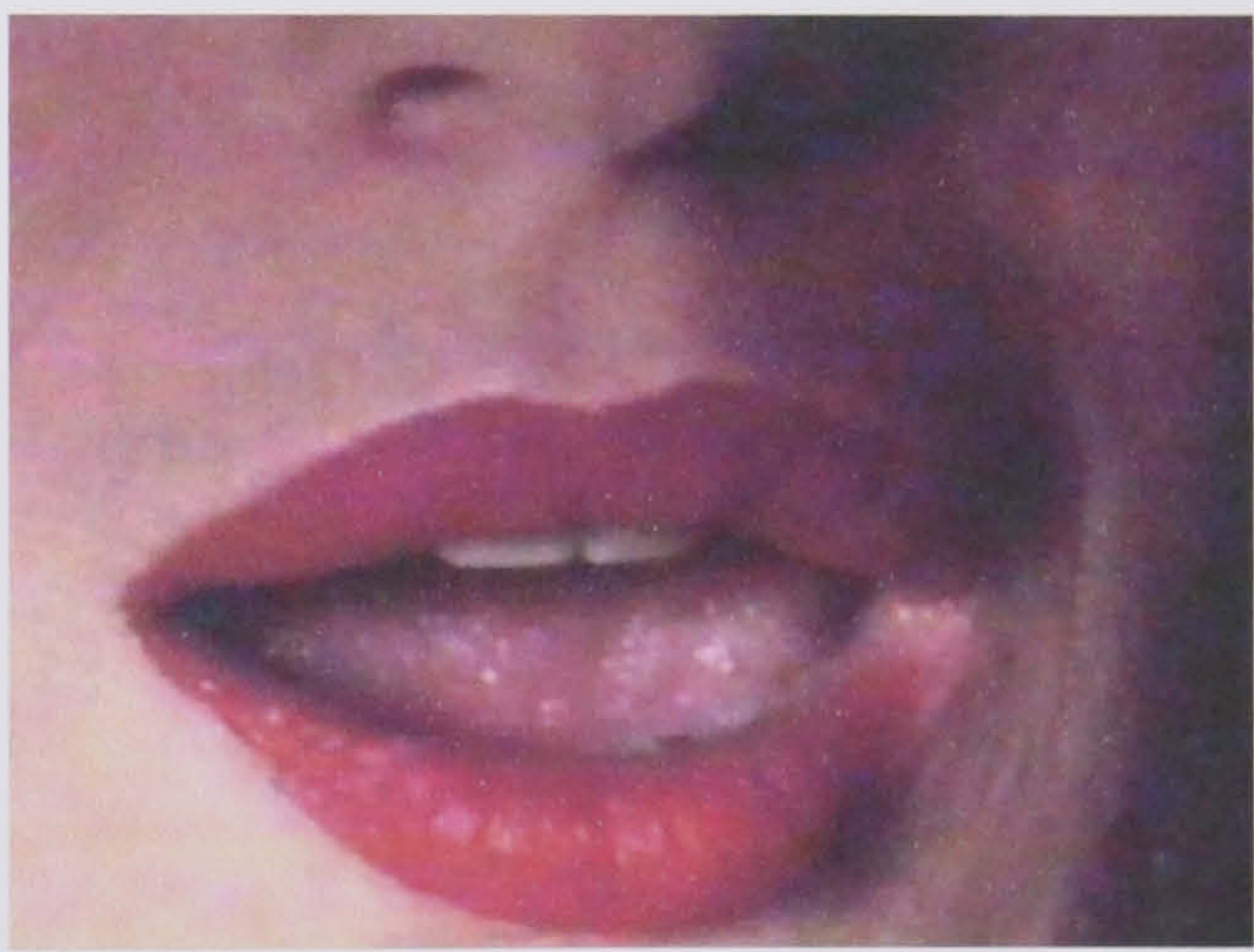


Fig. 3.20: Rebecca in the boathouse



Fig. 3.21: Rebecca in the boathouse

These imagined flashbacks, described by scriptwriter Arthur Hopcraft as 'rather like a haunting portrait coming to life' (quoted in Tiballs 1996, 53). accompany imagined/remembered dialogue which relates directly to the image of the other woman as a figure of failed domesticity. During these two scenes, remembered by Maxim and imagined by the new Mrs. de Winter during her husband's confession, Rebecca's voice mocks,

Of course I'll look after your precious Manderley for you, Max. I'll make it the most famous show place in the country. They'll say we are the happiest, luckiest, handsomest couple in all of England.

Accompanying this dialogue, close-ups of Rebecca's back, eyes, fingers and mouth show a fragmentation of the dead wife, almost as if the image of the other woman literally 'cracks up' under the remembrance of such an intense desire for domestic perfection (see figs. 3.18-3.19). This coupling of fragmented images of Rebecca with a discussion of her position as ideal wife and housekeeper continues later in the boathouse flashback, as she says to Maxim 'We have both played our parts too well. We're a loving couple. We adore each other... I'll be the perfect mother, Max. Just as I've been the perfect wife' (see figs. 3.20-3.21). Here, as before, it is exactly her failure to be 'the perfect wife' which precipitates this fragmented, distorted representation.

The 1979 version of *Rebecca* also gives an account of Rebecca's promise to be the ideal wife, in return for her husband's silence about her infidelities. During Maxim's confession to his new wife, he states,

She kept her side of the bargain. It was her taste, her skill which made Manderley the thing it is today. The china, the tapestries, the gardens, the

shrubs. even Happy Valley. None of that existed when my father was alive. That's all Rebecca.

The cataloguing of domestic decorative detail, which Maxim claims was Rebecca's forte, again references the conflict between the *image* of domestic perfection (surface detail) and the actuality of home life; here, however, it is the wife who was cruel and unfaithful. It is later implied that whilst the new Mrs. de Winter is unable to provide the *appearance* of domestic perfection as Rebecca did, she does offer her new husband the emotional stability of fidelity and love in the conclusion of the narrative. The representation of the other woman in both versions of *Rebecca* therefore contrasts with her image in other female Gothic adaptations, where she is associated with a lack of domestic skill; here she is depicted as a skilful housekeeper, adept at the art of home décor and 'keeping up appearances', although not the perfect, loving wife.

In keeping with the assertion made above, that the house in the female Gothic television adaptation is a potentially loaded site for interpretation in relation to the predicament of the central female protagonist, and that the mise-en-scène of the domestic location holds both literal and figurative meaning correlating to images of entrapment and secrecy, the spaces 'haunted' by the other women within these dramas also speak of her failure to become the perfect wife. In the case of *Rebecca* (1979), this failure is represented in the depiction of Rebecca's room (lovingly preserved by Mrs. Danvers (Anna Massey)), which the young Mrs. de Winter enters, inexplicably drawn to the places and objects which belonged to her predecessor. Her intrusion into the dark room, illuminated only by shafts of light coming from the doorway behind her, is made through a slow track, suggesting the young Mrs. de Winter's gaze as it takes in an impressive collection of the accoutrements of femininity (hairbrushes, jewellery, mirrors, paintings, flowers, etc.) within the heavily ornate chamber. As the

young woman advances to caress Rebecca's ruched satin night-gown case, the sensuous excess of the room is shown to have overwhelmed her, thus investing the house itself with the allure of the unknown predecessor. A similar moment from *Rebecca* (1997) also depicts the young Mrs. de Winter being drawn towards Rebecca's room, with much being made of its contrasting darkness to the rest of the house. As she walks through the corridors and up the staircases of the west wing, the polarity between the two Mrs. de Winters is emphasised by the lighting in the sequence, with the darkness of Rebecca's space emphasising her mysterious allure for her young replacement.

The rooms of the other woman in both these versions of *Rebecca* are therefore depicted as holding a certain draw, an almost supernatural power over the young woman of the house, represented as hidden, in-between spaces which act as the locales of female power/resistance within the domestic space of her new husband's familial manor. Approached along long, dusty, secret passageways, suggestive of a kind of clandestine feminine space away from the imposing, high ceiling-ed rooms of the rest of the house, the young heroine's exploration of these locations leads her closer toward her discovery of her potential fate (as victim of her husband's rage). In *Rebecca* (1979 and 1997) the discovery of Rebecca's chambers ultimately leads towards the new Mrs. de Winter's greater understanding of her husband, and thus, ultimately, her freedom from Manderley and her potential happiness; in *The Wyvern Mystery* however, the discovery of Vrau's recently vacated bedroom fills Alice with the true revolting horror of her situation.

In *The Wyvern Mystery*, the rooms of the 'other woman' (Charles' disfigured, criminally insane ex-wife, Vrau) are a clear representation of her position as a failed 'homemaker'. Within the confines of Carwell, the stately home in question, these

rooms appear as an image of degraded domesticity; in this room, Alice confronts, with a good deal of disgust, the rotting ‘remains’ of her predecessor’s home, questioning her choice of décor, fingering her filthy, insect infested clothing, and recoiling from the squalid, unclean bed and undusted surfaces of the furniture. Here, unlike the rest of the house, the period detail of the heritage drama is not simply absent (see the discussion above of Alice’s arrival at Carwell), but is so revolting and rotten with neglect that the heroine, and implicitly the viewer, recoils from it. As Alice embarks on her exploration of the house, a moment generic to all female Gothic television dramas which implicitly also allows the female reader-viewer to explore/confront the domestic space, she, like the viewer at home, is intrigued by the will to view.



Fig. 3.22: The other woman’s room

After being startled by a raven which flies out of the door to Vrau’s chambers, and flaps futilely against the closed windows in an attempt to escape, Alice and her maid, Dulcie, enter the gloomy, black corridor, and the following dialogue takes place: ‘What a gloomy place. Is it burnt?’ (Dulcie); ‘No it is not burnt. It is painted black.’ (Alice); ‘Who would paint it black, unless they were mad?’ (Dulcie). Their discussion of this décor, and their subsequent disgust at their surroundings, offers comment on

Vrau's position as anti-homemaker. Her bizarre choice of furnishings, and indeed, her deliberate sabotage of the clothing in the wardrobe which is about to be revealed (attracting cockroaches by placing a dead animal on top of her heavily ornate clothes), speaks of her rejection of her domestic role, a rejection which is equated here, as elsewhere in the narrative, with her insanity. As Dulcie retreats, frightened, the young woman of the house continues on into Vrau's bedroom, which is revealed in a series of point of view shots as being gloomy and almost organic in its state of decay (see fig.3.22). As Alice explores the space, the subjective shots isolate certain objects in the room (an empty bottle of laudanum, a broken mirror) which also express Vrau's denial of the role of ideal wife; Vrau's disfigured features and tatty clothing (a result of the fire which she in fact started) are a further embodiment of her rejection of the trappings of feminine beauty. However, it is the revulsion of Vrau's cockroach infested wardrobe which truly represents this rejection. Alice is drawn towards the clothes contained within the wardrobe in much the same way as the young Mrs. de Winter is drawn towards the silky surfaces of Rebecca's nightwear. However, Alice's exploration reveals a far more repugnant end to this attraction, with a plethora of cockroaches spilling out all over her hands, feet and dress. The final shots of this scene show Alice screaming and running, covered with cockroaches inside her dress and hair, and rely precisely on the impact of the juxtaposition of the period location/costume (a potential source of visual pleasure for the heritage viewer) and the revolting insects (a potential source of repulsion within the frame), to fully realise the extent of Vrau's rebellion against the expectations of domestic life. Here, just as Alice is forced to confront the reality of what lies beneath the surface of the glamorous costumes held within the wardrobe, so the viewer confronts the reality of the domestic space within the female Gothic heritage drama.

Ultimately, however, the house is unable to contain this failed wife: as Vrau finds Alice in her ex-husband's bed, she bursts through the wall above the headboard, the confines of the domestic space literally unable to restrain the failed wife and the hysteria/danger which she represents. At this moment, her position within the narrative is ambiguous, as it appears as if she brings nothing but disaster for Alice. Her attack provokes the death of Alice's husband and the (presumed) death of her son, which forces Alice out into her own meagre residence (a country cottage), and into the world of work (she goes to work on a farm). However, it is also Vrau's attack which frees Alice from the confines of her domestic prison (as she had complained to her husband in the first part of the drama, 'tis just that I feel so shut in here'), and which pre-figures her social and financial independence, her independence within her own home, and her freedom to come and go as she pleases. Later in the narrative, as Alice returns the favour of emancipation by freeing Vrau from the confines of her cell in the cellars of Carwell, which in turn allows Vrau to attack and kill her own captor, she also provides the information which reunites Alice with her son. In light of this, the other woman within the female Gothic narrative not only represents failure (the failure to be a good wife (like Rebecca) or a good homemaker (like Vrau)), but she also represents a possible resistance of those domestic ideals which the young heroine so anxiously attempts to negotiate. This explains the allure of the other woman for the young 'lady of the house', as she is so hypnotically drawn towards the other woman's rooms, and the hidden/dilapidated spaces of her new home. The almost supernatural charisma of Rebecca and the grotesque ferociousness of Vrau offer the young woman the promise of something other than domestic confinement and subservience to her husband's wishes: they offer strength, agency, and, ultimately, independence, and raise the question of whether it would be so bad to fail to be a domestic success. Even though

their endings are not unequivocally happy ones (Rebecca is, of course, dead before the narrative even begins, and Vrau will almost certainly be punished for the murder of Harry Fairfield (Jack Davenport)), their impact on the lives of the next generation of women who have been caught up in the same domestic prisons as they were allows for a certain sense of closure for the other woman.

Points of conjunction: subjective narration and the diegetic reader/viewer

What this chapter has outlined thus far has been the ways in which the heroine negotiates her role or position within the domestic space of the Gothic narrative: as such, it has focused on the analysis of specific locales within the mise-en-scène of the female Gothic dramas on television (the house and its particular elements), and rather taken for granted the connection between the text and the domestic viewer. What has not been made explicit within this analysis therefore is exactly how the model viewer enters or is implicated in the spaces of this mise-en-scène: from which, or rather, whose position are the exploratory tracks, pans, and zooms around this milieu taken? The question of the importance of subjective narration will dominate the latter part of this analysis of the female Gothic television adaptation, as the connection between heroine and model viewer, and their subsequent identification, is delineated.

On a fundamental level, the female Gothic television drama is taken from the point of view of the central female protagonist, this shared subjective position implying both optical and aural point of view (predominance of subjective camerawork and character-specific sound perspective), and narrative point of view (the viewer shares her basic knowledge of ‘what’s going on’ throughout the drama, and, it is expected, is sympathetic towards the heroine’s predicament). This conjoined

position, between the heroine and the model viewer, therefore has a great impact on the way in which the plot is perceived and organised; for example, once inside the dreadful house of the female Gothic, much of the audio-visual perspective, which the viewer implicitly shares with the heroine, is taken from an obscured position (cracks through doors, wind-whipped balconies, a shadowy window, etc.). Tania Modleski notes the importance of this shared position of uncertainty in relation to the female Gothic in its literary form, when she states, ‘The reader shares some of the heroine’s uncertainty about what is going on and what the lover/husband is up to. The reader is nearly as powerless in her understanding as the heroine’ (1982a, 60). In the television adaptation, the viewer, like the heroine, does not hear or see all they need to make sense of the plot from the outset, but rather is privy to snatches of dialogue and glimpses of visual clues to the central enigma of the drama (the secret which must be uncovered in order to achieve narrative resolution). This depiction of subjectivity on the verges of the domestic space very much reflects the wife’s position within the nineteenth century home in general, and marks an exclusion from the understanding of events which comes from her husband’s ability to move between the social and domestic worlds.



Fig. 3.23: The obscured point of view

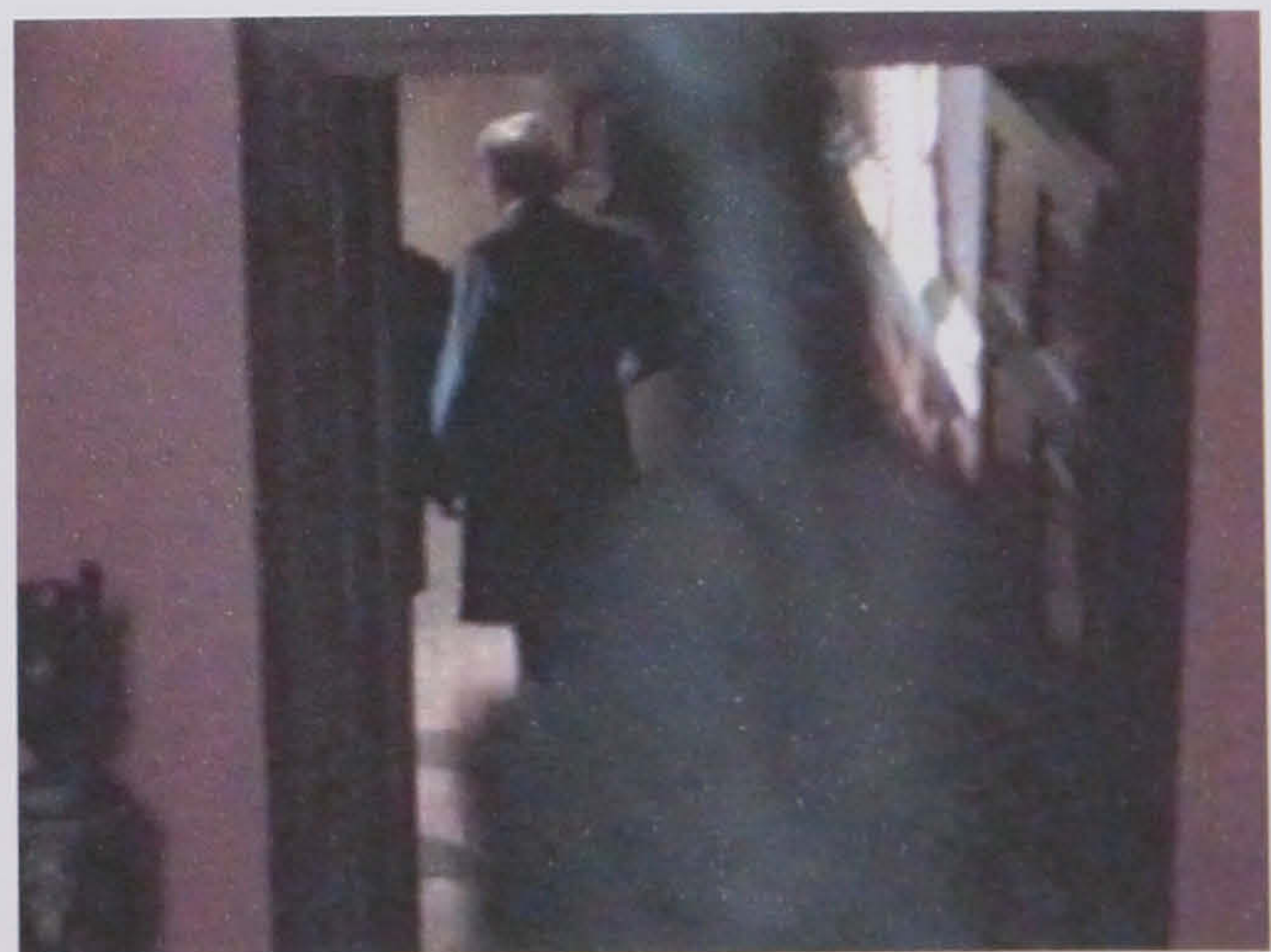


Fig. 3.24: The obscured point of view

In *The Woman in White* (1997), for example, Marian is barred from consulting the solicitor who arrives to discuss the financial position of her sister and brother-in-law; this exclusion is marked by an obscuring of vision and sound, which also clearly withholds the discussion between Sir Percival and the solicitor from the viewer. An overhead shot, taken from the landing above the two men, is viewed from Marian's subjective position (see fig. 3.23); as the men walk past, she (and the viewer) hear some dialogue: 'Matters have reached a head and the situation may have become serious...'. At this point, a swift, hand-held track is made up from this point of view shot to a close-up of Marian's face as she listens above, looking down in the direction of the two men. As their conversation continues ('We must address ourselves to...'), the sound trails out, prompting Marian to move stealthily down the stairs, tilting her head to listen to the conversation ('If I can obtain a signature to the papers...', 'That will resolve the...'). As she turns her head towards the men on a lower flight of stairs, the shot again cuts to a wobbly, hand-held point-of-view shot, which tracks past an ornamental banister carving in the foreground of the shot (a raven), and settles on a perspective through a diegetic frame (a doorway) into another room which the two men pass through (see fig. 3.24); again, the sound of their conversation returns briefly as we hear the solicitor say 'We can then proceed to clear the outstanding bills as they become due'. As a pronounced moment of subjective camerawork and sound recording, taken from Marian's point of view, the constant loss of sound (achieved through realistic subjective sound perspective) and image (elements of mise-en-scène continually obscure parts of the frame (the ornate banister carving of the raven, the doorway and walls of the room which the men pass into to)), withholds vital plot information from the central female protagonist and the viewer simultaneously. This

motif of obscured sound is subsequently repeated in the sequence immediately following this one; as Marian lies in bed at night, the camera slowly tracks into a facial close-up as an indecipherable argument and faint cries are heard in another room of the house. Marian's reactions to this noise express the fear and confusion felt in relation to her position within the domestic space (the noise is presumably the sound of her sister's new husband bullying and abusing her), a confusion which is also shared by the viewer.



Fig. 3.25: The obscured point-of-view

As described above in relation to the importance of the 'exterior' spaces of the female Gothic narrative, when Marian clings to the outside of the house later in the drama as she struggles to hear Percival and Fosco plotting below, the viewer also sees only part of the picture, from her point of view (see fig. 3.25), as the rest of the frame is obscured by the edges of the roof, and they hear only snatches of detail from their conspiracy, as the men move in and out of the house. This realistic sound perspective here not only withholds the detail of the women's impending fate from Marian, but it also withholds it from the viewer. No cut away is made to the inside of the house, thus providing the viewer with more information than Marian is knowledgeable of, but

rather, the viewer remains hovering on the outskirts of the house, thus retaining a sense of narrative suspense. This shared perspective is consequently generically important in dramas such as *The Woman in White* or *The Turn of the Screw*, where the viewer's shared position with the heroine means that narrative ambiguity is maintained throughout the course of the drama.

Another moment of marked subjectivity that is frequently evoked in the female Gothic television adaptation is the fantasy/dream-like flashback, often shown as a montage of images from the past, present, and future of the drama. These psychological point of view sequences, occurring at moments of crisis for the heroine, build up a picture of the whole narrative (albeit in a non-linear or non-chronological order) whereby sounds and images from other moments in the drama (and, occasionally, sounds and images from the back-story which are not shown elsewhere in the adaptation) are edited together in order to emphatically represent the protagonist's inability to make sense of her situation and the central enigma or secret which must be uncovered in order to resolve the narrative¹². For example, as Mrs. Danvers goads the young Mrs. de Winter to kill herself by jumping through Rebecca's bedroom window (in *Rebecca* (1979)), a series of images are dissolved together which convey the young woman's troubled relationship to her domestic space and her dead predecessor. Following an initial shot of Mrs. Danvers' face which rapidly disappears into a fog, dissolves are made to the following shots:

Shot One: Rebecca's hand sticking out of the sea

Shot Two: Close-up of Mrs. Danvers' face

Shot Three: The front page of Rebecca's poetry book, burning (the new Mrs. de Winter threw it on to the fire in the first episode of the serial)

Shot Four: A travelling shot of the trees on the drive of Manderley
(from the newly married couple's return home)

Shot Five: A medium long shot of a little girl standing at the gatehouse
on the couple's arrival

Shot Six: A tracking shot (from Mrs. de Winter's point of view) of the
line of house servants

Shot Seven: An extreme close-up zoom into a rhododendron flower

Shot Eight: The fog

Shot Nine: A repeated close-up of Mrs. Danvers' face

Shot Ten: An extreme long shot of the misty bay

Shot Eleven: A high angle close-up of Maxim's face saying 'Don't be
afraid. Jump!'

Shot Twelve: A tilted point of view shot looking down from the window
to the courtyard below.

This sequence of 'recovered memory', accompanied by a Debussy-inspired piece of piano music, utilises montage editing techniques to piece together a series of seemingly unrelated images as clues to the secret which threatens the young girl here (Maxim's murder of Rebecca and the inherent threat of Manderley), as well as offering a flashback which expresses the anxiety attached to the young Mrs. de Winter's position within the home. At this point of crisis, when her life is threatened and she feels the paranoia of her husband wishing her dead, she 'revisits' shots from her arrival at Manderley (the rhododendron, the little girl, the avenue of trees) in a sequence which builds up an image of domestic paranoia in a non-linear fashion until it begins to make sense.

¹² This is a technique that was also discussed in the previous chapter in relation to Mrs. Drusse's

The frequent use of subjective camerawork and sound perspective does not only hold the model (female) viewer in the position of victimised woman throughout the female Gothic narrative, however. On another level, the extent of subjective narration within the female Gothic television drama may be read as evidence of female empowerment and agency. One of the most striking changes made in David Pirie's adaptation of *The Woman in White* (1997) is the reassignment of the narrator's voice from the very beginning of the drama. Whereas the 1982 BBC adaptation of *The Woman in White* tells the story from the perspective of Laura and Marian's art teacher, Walter Hartright, and the opening monologue/flashback is taken from his perspective, Pirie's adaptation of the text begins in Limmeridge graveyard, with a tracking shot over the gravestones which is accompanied by Marian's voiceover. The subsequent flashback following this voiceover is therefore taken from the central female protagonist's perspective, and indeed, her explanatory voiceover continues over the introduction of Mr. Hartright at the train station (even though Marian cannot have actually witnessed his arrival and his confrontation of Anne Catherick). This significant revision made to the female Gothic narrative thus inscribes the importance of female subjectivity from the start, and actually frames the whole narrative as Marian's memory/flashback, marking the entire drama as univocal, originating from Marian's perspective; this is also strikingly different from the original narration in Collins' novel, in which the story is told from a variety of perspectives. This unusual instance of female narrational omniscience (the fact that she recounts events to which she was not witness) is reinstated whenever expository voice-over is used throughout the adaptation, which is always spoken in Marian's voice. In light of this significant variation of narration, female subjectivity is assigned an unanticipated

flashbacks in *Riget*.

strength within the female Gothic narrative, even though it also marks the heroine's, and, implicitly, the model viewer's, exclusion from important information at various points in the narrative.

This reading of the flashback /interior point of view sequence as a sign of strength/resistance is in keeping with Susan Hayward's comments on the flashback as a potential moment of female potency. She states that 'the flashback... can be a moment when the psyche has control of its unconscious. So flashbacks of whatever gender should represent an ideal moment of empowerment' (1996, 86). Hayward goes on to state, however, that many female flashbacks in classical narrative cinema are mediated by the male 'expert' protagonist (analyst, detective, etc.), thus disavowing it as a moment of empowerment¹³. On the contrary however, in the female Gothic adaptation, mediation of memory/imagination is almost always associated with the female heroine.



Fig. 3.26: Imagining Rebecca

The previous discussion of Maxim's flashback sequence from *Rebecca* (1997), in which fragments of the other woman are shown, illustrates this strength of

¹³ For example, Mildred/Joan Crawford's narration in *Mildred Pierce* (Michael Curtiz, US, 1945)

subjectivity. Although the fragmented images of Rebecca are accompanied by Maxim's voice-over, the cut is made from the flashback sequence to a close-up of his wife's face (see fig. 3.26), suggesting that the flashback comes from her imagination, thus affording her the narrative agency of imagining what he describes.

However one reads these pronounced moments of subjectivity within the female Gothic narrative, whether as an expression of exclusion or empowerment, they rather obviously mean that the model viewer is invited to identify with the heroine. As was stated earlier in this analysis, the viewer more often than not shares the heroine's audio-visual position within the *mise-en-scène* and follows the narrative from her general point of view. Jackie Stacey discusses the meanings of identification within screen theory in relation to this conjoined position of protagonist and viewer.

Identification has often loosely meant sympathising or engaging with a character. It has also been understood to suggest something analogous to the idea of "point of view", watching and following the film from a character's point of view. This involves not only visual point of view, constructed by a type of shot, editing sequences and so on, but also narrative point of view, produced through the sharing of knowledge, sympathy, or moral values with the protagonist. Identification has thus been used as a kind of common sense term within some film and literary studies, referring to a set of cultural processes which describe different kinds of connections between spectators/readers and fictional others.

(1994, 130)

Whilst Stacey's own analysis goes on to work with evidence of the actual experience of various forms of identification, derived from interviews with cinema audience

members (the empirical viewer), what she describes in the above quotation is the textual processes which allow for viewer-protagonist identification.

Television criticism has also addressed the possibility of identification through the essential 'closeness' of the medium to the viewer. For example, Lynne Joyrich, in an analysis of television melodrama, discusses the potentially over-involved female viewer:

In the popular imagination... the woman's relationship to the screen is an overly close one – she is so bound to the drama, so susceptible to the image, that it can even evoke a physical reaction in her tearful response.

(1992, 241)

Joyrich subsequently goes on to argue that tropes of proximity (the female viewer's closeness to the screen) have been particularly applied to discussions of television viewing, and outlines the ways that those overarching structures of viewing which have come to be seen as the 'facts' of television reception (intimacy, immediacy, closeness, etc.), have been relevant to the study of gendered television audiences. Joyrich's evocation of the closeness of television to its viewer supports this thesis' analysis of the female Gothic on television and the conflation of both the heroine and the female model viewer as well as the central domestic spaces of these narratives (the terrible house on screen and the home in which the drama is viewed).

Within the female Gothic adaptation, this inherent closeness between the heroine and model viewer is implied through a frequent use of facial close-up, whereby the heroine's face is writ large upon the screen in order to imply shared knowledge between the protagonist and the viewer, or in moments in which something has been left unsaid by the heroine (often the expression of uncanny sensation/déjà vu, or a realisation related to the secret/enigma), but which, it is assumed, the viewer

implicitly understands). Gazing directly into the camera (and, therefore, the viewer's eyes), would, on the whole, be far too formally disruptive, except where the camera's positioning is explained diegetically (by being placed in the position of a mirror, for example): this kind of shot is seen on Alice's wedding night in *The Wyvern Mystery* (see fig. 3.27).



Fig. 3.27: Looking into the mirror

Here, as Alice gazes into the camera's lens, ostensibly preparing herself for bed, her uneasiness is given almost unmediated expression as her face is brought so close to the camera; at this moment of realisation (of her impending fate, perhaps), the closeness between the threatened heroine and the model viewer is emphasised. In a *Radio Times* interview given to coincide with the broadcast of *The Wyvern Mystery*, director Alex Pillai emphasised the necessity of this closeness: 'we tried to express the world as [Alice] experiences it. The main thing for us was to use camera and lighting to get inside her head' (Griffiths 2000, 20). This desire to create points of conjunction between heroine and viewer is taken here as one of the defining characteristics of the recent female Gothic adaptation, a fact also reflected in David Pirie's comments in the same article on the difference between the literary and television versions of *The*

Wyvern Mystery: ‘the whole point of dramatic narrative is to narrow the perspective, to keep the story taut and to make the audience sympathetic to the main protagonist’ (ibid., 18).

As was suggested above however, this kind of direct facial close-up is extraordinary; far more usual are the slightly offset close-ups of the heroine’s face, which nonetheless allow for an inherent/covert acknowledgement of understanding between protagonist and viewer. In *The Woman in White* (1997), the use of racking focus, whereby the heroine’s face is brought into focus in the foreground of a shot, excluding the figures and objects around her (which may well have prompted the moment of uncanny sensation or realisation), is deployed to emphasise this moment of implied shared awareness. As Walter Hartwright (Andrew Lincoln) paints Marian’s sister in the garden of their family home, thus highlighting the striking resemblance between her and Anne Catherick (their illegitimate sister who has been sexually abused by Laura’s husband-to-be), the camera pans left slightly and refocuses, obscuring all else but Marian’s troubled face (see fig. 3.28).



Fig. 3.28: The heroine racks into focus

Whilst she cannot actually know any of the information implied by this link between Laura and Anne at this point in the narrative, the heroine's close-up acts as a recognition of her closeness to the viewer, as they both move closer to the disclosure of this association.

In fact, the emphasis on the facial close-up in the female Gothic adaptation has been seen as replacing the more usual slow tracks and pans of the heritage drama. Gareth Neane, producer of *The Woman in White* (1997) has argued that this predominance of the facial close-up is what marks his production out from other literary adaptations on television: he describes the visual style of the adaptation as 'not sitting back in wide shot looking at costumes. There are big close-ups, shots tight on eyeline, and a camera that moves around with a slight untidiness that you don't normally see in period drama' (Ellis 1997, 22). This comment clearly marks female Gothic adaptations such as *The Woman in White* (1997) as being aimed towards the translation of subjectivity and identification over the more usual drive towards spectatorship and a detached sense of visual pleasure found in the observation of detail within the heritage text. Furthermore, the centrality of the domestic heroine offers, in a very basic sense, something other than costumes/home furnishings to look at.

The female protagonist is further linked to the model viewer by undertaking the act of reading and/or viewing during the narrative; as a diegetic consumer of female Gothic fictions, the central female protagonist of these dramas is directly equated with the female viewer. As was argued at the beginning of this chapter, the producers of adaptations of female Gothic novels on television often associate the act of viewing these dramas with the act of reading of Gothic literature¹⁴. Consequently, the heroine of the female Gothic television adaptation takes on the role of diegetic

¹⁴ As in the discussion of the *assumed* viewer of *Rebecca* (1997), above.

reader-viewer through the act of reading Gothic novels (and their literary predecessor, the fairy tale) during the course of the drama, an activity which is often present or referred to at the beginning of the female Gothic adaptation; through this seemingly innocuous introduction of the heroine's reading matter from the very outset of the dramas, the mechanisms of identification which were outlined in the preceding analysis are made more explicit.

An illustration of this inter-textual consumption of Gothic fictions is found at the beginning of *The Woman in White* (1997), shortly after the arrival of her tutor, when Marian announces her interest in the female Gothic narrative; she states, 'I am sorry if you caught me observing your arrival. My sister and I are so fond of Gothic novels that we sometimes act as if we were in them', to which Walter replies, 'You would certainly seem to have the perfect setting for your pretence'. This self-referential exchange, which makes comment on a certain knowingness in the young women's performance of their roles within the paranoid domestic drama, as well as highlighting the importance of the domestic location/setting, clearly draws a parallel between the female protagonist as diegetic consumer of the female Gothic narrative and the female viewer as extra-diegetic consumer of the same.

Again, at the beginning of *The Wyvern Mystery*, an establishing shot of the infant Alice (Tamara Harvey) shows her reading a fairy story, a junior version of the female Gothic narrative (*Bluebeard*, *Beauty and the Beast*, etc.) which, as Marina Warner notes, centres upon 'the transferral from one [house] to the other... the central experience of the fairy tale heroine, as it in turn constituted the most crucial event in women's lives' (1993, 30). In this establishing sequence, a certain closeness between the little girl and the female Gothic text is identified by her physical interaction with the book and the way in which she traces the illustrations with her fingers.



Fig. 3.29: The Gothic picture



Fig. 3.30: Enacting the Gothic picture

Following this, a close-up point of view shot shows an illustration of a girl running in the woods (see fig. 3.29), placing the eyes of the model viewer in conjunction with the young protagonist as her adult voice-over states ‘when I was very young, my father held me tightly and told me of witches and goblins. If only I had known how close they were’, the confessional voiceover further establishing a sense of intimacy or shared experience. At this moment, the shared experience of domestic anxiety (shared between the protagonist and the model viewer) is reaffirmed through the shared experience of consuming female Gothic fictions, and television’s sense of intimacy ensures that the viewer is co-present or written into the female Gothic narrative on television. Here, by gazing at this image, the young Alice is not only depicted as diegetic reader, but also a viewer. Furthermore, this image has added significance in that it will be repeated ‘for real’ later in the drama as the adult Alice runs through the woods of Wyvern, away from the advances of Squire Fairfield (Derek Jacobi), her lecherous benefactor (see fig. 3.30). Here the direct match on image, the similarities in costume, composition, and patterns of light and dark within each frame, configure Alice as a diegetic reader-viewer within her own text and as the diegetic consumer of her own eventual female Gothic narrative. As the drama begins with her consumption

of the female Gothic narrative (and she will again return to reading this book, given to her by her dead father, directly after the consummation of her marriage), the act of reading in *The Wyvern Mystery* also implicitly relates to the female Gothic as Oedipal drama. Here the fairy story book, and therefore the narrative of paranoia and abuse, is literally passed on to Alice by her father.

However, it is not only the depiction of reading within the narrative which highlights the closeness between protagonist and viewer in the female Gothic television adaptation; explicit moments of ‘viewing’ may do this also. To elaborate, these dramas often feature shots or sequences in which the heroine is shown engaging in viewing activities which are equivalent to those of the viewer of the female Gothic drama, or, more widely, the heritage literary adaptation in general. These ‘moments of viewing’ are also explicitly related to the particular viewing pleasures of the female viewer. Exemplary of this gendered intertextual viewing is Miss’s (Jodhi May) desiring gaze on The Master (Colin Firth) in *The Turn of the Screw*, which can be read as a kind of doubling of the heritage viewer’s desire for this actor (initially located in his appearance as Mr. Darcy in the popular serial *Pride and Prejudice*). The Master/Firth has little actual presence within the drama (he appears only in a short sequence at the very beginning of *Turn of the Screw*), and as a result can be seen to simply act as a lure for both ‘Miss’ (towards an exploration of his house, and his young charges) and the viewer (towards watching the adaptation in the first instance, in that his casting was highlighted in the marketing of this adaptation, even though he has a very small role in the drama). This doubled viewing is emphasised by Miss’s gaze on the master’s portrait as she first enters his house, which marks her burgeoning desire for him, as well as providing a point of identification between Miss and the heritage viewer (the objectification of Firth). Following a point of view shot of this

portrait, a long shot confirms Miss's gaze, as she states 'It's a most agreeable residence. Your uncle has provided well for you', to which Flora (Grace Robinson) replies 'Yes, isn't he sweet'. Here, the young girl's seemingly innocuous comment addresses both the implicit gazes on the image of the master/Colin Firth (Miss's gaze and that of the implied female viewer), thus explicitly pointing up the conjunction of the heroine and the viewer.

Ultimately, it is the desire to *view* her own Gothic narrative/location that drives the female protagonist on throughout the drama, towards the revelation of her worst fears and her ensuing escape from the threatening domestic space in which she finds herself. It is this 'will to view', exemplified by Alice's adamant statement at the edges of the other woman's room in *The Wyvern Mystery* ('No, I *want* to see'), which aligns the female Gothic heroine with the television viewer in no uncertain terms. The drama which perhaps most clearly represents this conflation of reading and viewing through the depiction of the central female protagonist as diegetic consumer of Gothic fictions is the BBC's 1987 adaptation of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*. The original novel, a satire on the female Gothic novel, places this doubling of readership at the centre of its narrative; the heroine of the book, Cathy, is obsessed with reading Gothic 'pot-boilers', so much so that when she finds herself in her suitor's eponymously titled Gothic pile, her reading appears to be repeating itself in real life.

The television adaptation of *Northanger Abbey* plays upon the representation of Cathy (Katherine Schlesinger) as a diegetic stand-in for the female Gothic reader-viewer by fully visualising extracts of her reading matter through imagined point-of-view sequences at key moments in the narrative, moments which are reminiscent of the excessive Gothic adaptations of the Hammer studio. Indeed, much of the criticism

of this adaptation in the press focused on these moments. Peter Kemp of *The Independent* wrote, for example:

Maggie Wadey's appalling adaptation and Giles Foster's vulgar production vandalised this ironic tale. Catherine's Gothic day-dreams got bloated into Hammer Horror sequences of blood-bespattered virgins and fiends with blue-lit faces. Jane Austen's scenes of crisp wit made way for mush of Wadey's own concoction, (1987, 11)

whereas the *Daily Telegraph*'s review was more complimentary:

[female Gothics à la Ann Radcliffe] live on in the conventions of the horror movie genre. It therefore seemed entirely justifiable that the director... chose to render the lovely Catherine's fantasies in a cod Hammer style, dripping with blood and hymeneal symbolism. (Anon. 1987, 13)

Katherine Scheslinger was in fact cast in the role of Catherine with the express purpose of emphasising the possibilities of viewer-heroine identification. Director Giles Foster commented on the importance of 'everywoman' casting and its potential to 'open up' possible points of identification between viewer and text in an interview for the *Observer* magazine. As David Lewin writes,

[f]or Giles Foster, the director of *Northanger Abbey*, the challenge was to find an actress with whom people could identify: "A young actress whom could be both sophisticated and naïve, self contained and romantic and with a big dose of common sense: to be both the imperfect heroine and the desirable one". (1987, 30)

Here Foster not only highlights the usual conflation of character and actress when discussing the decisions made in the casting process, but also states that the actress's accessibility to the viewer was a deciding factor in casting her.

The opening sequence of the adaptation begins with the act of reading as Cathy is shown engrossed in a novel (which we later learn is Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*), her voice-over reading aloud and thus immediately engendering a sense of closeness between protagonist and model viewer. From this image, a cut is made to a close up of an illustration from Cathy's novel (see fig. 3.31), and then an extreme close-up of the same, which is subsequently dissolved to the first shot of Cathy's fantasy world, an exact match on image which marks the transfer from the illustration in Cathy's novel/the 'found text' to her imagined point of view (see fig. 3.32).

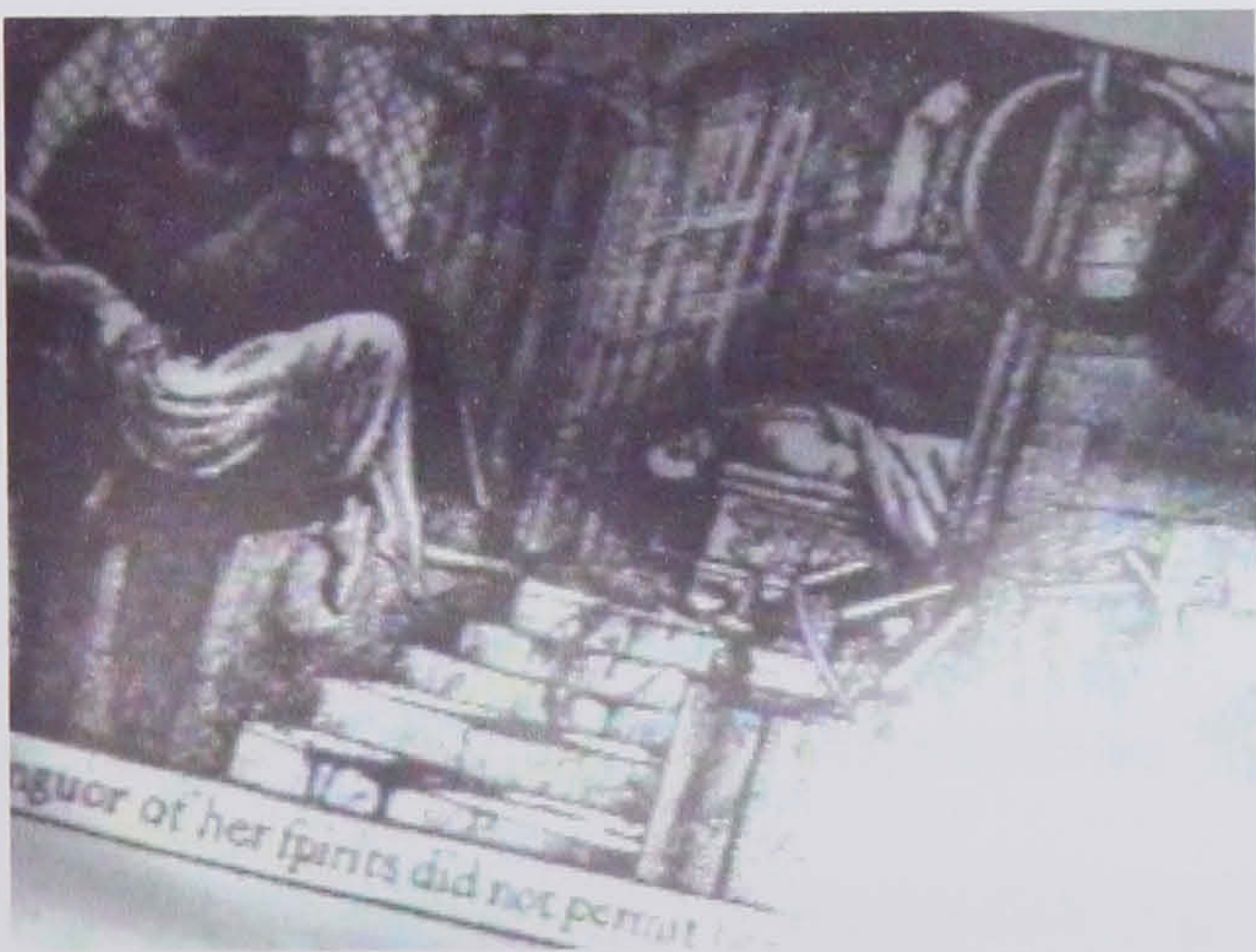


Fig. 3.31: The Gothic novel



Fig. 3.32: Enacting the Gothic novel

In this dissolve, and subsequently in the rest of this sequence (which features a Hammer-esque combination of gory, soft focus images of the victim-heroine (played by Cathy herself) being prayed upon by dastardly male figure (in the shape of her future father in law (Robert Hardy)), and a loud, synthesised soundtrack), the notion of viewer-heroine identification is dramatised: here, Cathy is the diegetic representation

of an over-involved reader/viewer who puts herself in the place of the victim-heroine through the subjective, imagined point-of view sequence. As a dissolve is made from the protagonist's face as the victim-heroine of her novel to the protagonist's face as herself, the act of the viewer-heroine identification is portrayed within the text itself. If, as has been argued throughout the course of this analysis of the female Gothic narrative on television, a number of mechanisms of identification are put in place within these texts (the doubling of domestic space (the house within the text and the house in which the text is viewed), the emphasis on subjective narration, and the configuration of the heroine as a diegetic 'stand in' for the female consumer of Gothic fictions), then the visualisation of Cathy's Gothic day dreams may be read as a kind of amalgamation of these essential elements of the female Gothic adaptation.

In conclusion, as in the resolution of the 1997 version of *The Woman in White* (which centres on the recovery of the feminine text (Anne's diary), and therefore on the possibility of two equally victimised women making contact with each other through the act of reading), perhaps the female Gothic television drama may be seen as potentially transgressive, in that it allows for points of contact between the female domestic viewer and the dramatisation of anxieties converging on women's position in the home. Previously, Lynne Joyrich (referencing an argument made by Laura Mulvey (1986)) had argued that the sense of resistance or subversion often associated with cinematic melodrama is impossible within the realms of the television drama. She states, 'as TV brought popular entertainment into the home, national consensus triumphed over potentially oppositional melodrama' (1992, 228). This analysis of the female Gothic adaptation, itself a form of television melodrama, refutes Joyrich's claim. What it is hoped has been shown during the course of this discussion is that the impact of the domestic viewing context brings the female viewer's fears relating to her

home and domestic relationships into stark relief, offering a textual space in which these anxieties may be worked through, if not necessarily resolved. In this sense, whilst it might be unwise to view these Gothic dramas as wholly radical, it is possible to argue that they offer sites for recognition of domestic anxiety for a model viewer who is written into, or, more accurately, recorded into, the female Gothic television adaptation.

American Gothics

In addition to its reappearance on European television during the 1990s¹, the Gothic flourished in many and diverse areas of North American culture during this decade. Christoph Grunenberg, curator of a major exhibition entitled *Gothic* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Massachusetts in 1997, focusing on Gothic images and narratives in contemporary visual art, film, and television, noted in the book which accompanied this exhibition, that,

a predilection for the Gothic has deeply affected all areas of contemporary life – from “high” literature to “schlock” science fiction, mystery, and romance novels; penetrating art, architecture, design, fashion and graphic design; to be found in advertisements and on record covers; present in popular music of today as in the revival of Gregorian chants and medieval hymns; and, most pronounced, making its daily appearance in film and television, where an obsession with sex, crime and the proclivities of twisted yet clever serial killers has developed into one of the most popular categories in mainstream entertainment. (1997, 210)

Grunenberg, who explains this ‘predilection’ as a reaction to the approach of the end of the millennium, or ‘a true fin de siècle spirit of cultural pessimism and spiritual malaise’ (ibid., 208), is also joined by other cultural commentators in the opinion that the Gothic enjoyed a certain renaissance in the United States during the final decade of the twentieth century. For instance, as discussed in chapter one of this thesis, Mark Edmundson, writing in the same year as Grunenberg, finds the discourses of the

¹ See chapters three and four of this thesis.

Gothic present in 'media renderings of the O.J. Simpson case, in [America's] political discourse, in our modes of therapy, on TV news, on talk shows like *Oprah*, in our discussions of AIDS and of the environment' (1997, xii), going on to conclude that, 'American culture at large has become suffused with Gothic assumptions, with Gothic characters and plots' (ibid.). It is not the intention of the final chapter of this thesis to take up this question of why this prevalence should be so; indeed, Grunenberg's explanation of 'pre-millennial tension' was disproved as soon as this popularity continued beyond the twentieth century. One need only look towards the burgeoning record and concert ticket sales of über-Goth Marilyn Manson, or the recent revival in Gothic fashion to see that the attraction to the Gothic could not simply be explained as a reaction to the approach of the end of the millennium. Rather, what this chapter will seek to do is examine the Gothic trend in North American television during this period, which may be identified as originating in David Lynch's uncanny serial drama, *Twin Peaks*, described by Lenora Ledwon as 'the first series to tap the full potential of the "Television Gothic"... [utilising] familiar Gothic themes and devices such as incest, the grotesque, repetition, interpolated narration, haunted settings, mirrors, doubles and supernatural occurrences' (1993, 260), and continuing through a number of long running series which frequently featured some, if not all, of the 'Gothic themes and devices' outlined by Ledwon above. These series included *The X-Files*, *American Gothic*, *Millennium*, *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, *Profiler*, *Brimstone*, and *The Others*, to name the more high profile examples, but, for the sake of brevity, this examination of the Gothic television of the United States during the last decade will focus on two series as case studies: *American Gothic* (a 22 week serial drama set in the fictitious South-Carolinian town of Trinity, focused on the struggle between Sheriff Buck (Gary Cole), the personification of evil with supernatural powers, and the saintly ghost of

Merlyn Temple (Sarah Paulson), the girl murdered by Buck in order to gain access to her brother Caleb (Lucas Black), his son who was born after Buck raped Merlyn and Caleb's mother), and *Millennium* (a three-season Gothic cop series, based around the fortunes of an ex-FBI profiler, Frank Black (Lance Henrickson) as he investigates numerous serial murders and the shady 'Millennium Group', of which he becomes a part, and attempts to keep his family safe from harm). Both series, made for different networks in the heyday of this trend, may be seen as representative of Gothic television in North America during this period.

Neither series, however, can be seen as a complete commercial success in terms of Nielsen ratings points. *Millennium* premiered in the states 'with some of the best numbers for the season' (Genge 1997a, xi), but ratings soon fell, even though 'what numbers it was pulling in were all in the right demographics, that lucrative market between 18 and 49 years old' (ibid., xii). Similarly, *American Gothic* was viewed as a critical success which was not reflected in its viewing figures: 'although *American Gothic* was embraced by critics as well as viewers the series was, unfortunately, not the success that CBS was counting on so far as ratings go' (Eramo 1997, 13). Interestingly, however, both series were seen as artistically or creatively successful, drawing in a small discerning audience who were seen to appreciate the eccentricities and innovations of both series.

The examination of *American Gothic* and *Millennium* offered in the final chapter of this thesis has a dual focus, reflecting the concerns of the previous analyses of European television, although both 'strands' of this analysis are also concerned with looking at North American television in a nationally specific context. Firstly, echoing the examination of British Gothic television in the 1960s and 70s in chapter two of this thesis, this analysis will ask how the American Gothic television of the 1990s

continued to challenge the technological possibilities and limitations of the medium for which it was produced, seeking to further outline a correlation between medium innovation and the Gothic (and, more particularly, the supernatural Gothic). It will be suggested, in the opening of this chapter, that series such as *American Gothic* and *Millennium* continue the formal experimentation of programmes like ABC's innovative literary adaptation series in the UK, *Mystery and Imagination*, combining both the suggestive and expressive modes of Gothic television, as outlined in the second chapter of this thesis. As a theoretical framework for this element of the analysis, John Thornton Caldwell's work on the televisual aesthetic of North American television in the 1980s and 90s will again be cited as an important starting point from which to begin to think about historical questions of medium specificity and to attempt to delineate the ways in which developments in the television industry have enabled innovative representations of the supernatural within the Gothic narrative. It was noted in the introduction of this thesis that the conjunction of representations of the supernatural within the Gothic narrative and the 'showcasing' of medium-specific innovations is not a new phenomenon; the spectres of Robertson's Phantasmagorias, the ghosts of the eighteenth century London patent theatres, and the disembodied floating heads of George Méliès' 'trick' cinematography are all a testament to this fact. However, it will be argued during the course of this chapter that rather than prompting technical innovation, what Gothic serials such as *American Gothic* and *Millennium* have done is 'tap into' the potential of certain nascent production technologies in order to realise a believable representation of that which had been previously unrepresentable: namely the supernatural and the uncanny. The first part of this analysis of North American Gothic television will therefore attempt to marry an analysis of the televisual Gothic aesthetic to an understanding of some

technical, structural, and economic changes in the North American television industry, seeing televisuality as a response to competition just as chapters two and three of this thesis have done with British television in the 1960s and Danish television in the 1990s.

Secondly, in relation to the central argument of this thesis (that domestic space lies at the focal centre of the Gothic narrative on television), this analysis of *American Gothic* and *Millennium* will scrutinise the familial Gothic narrative and the way in which both these series are preoccupied with concerns about the home and family. This focus on the family as the locus of the Gothic narrative clearly raises similar issues about self reflexivity, ‘family viewing’, and the domestic viewing context to those evoked in the previous analysis of female Gothic television in the UK. It will also be argued that the familial Gothic narrative is both specific to Gothic television and also typical of a broader Gothic tradition in the United States. In conclusion the point will be made that in the context of the television industry in the US, the mirroring of families on screen and families at home ultimately evokes fears about television, the Gothic narrative, and the morality of entertainment.

Televisuality and the American Gothic

As asserted in the introduction, this chapter will begin by thinking about the way in which televisual innovation and the aesthetics of Gothic television intercepted with one another at this key moment in TV history, and how and why the production of Gothic television in North America in the 1990s may have come about. The argument made in the introduction of this analysis, that serial drama in the US made during the 1990s somehow showcased changes within the industry, evokes a characterisation of

the industry prior to and during this decade which must be delineated before a greater understanding of the televisual Gothic aesthetic of *American Gothic* and *Millennium* can be reached. In order to offer such an industrial contextualisation, John Thornton Caldwell's study of the North American television industry during the latter part of the twentieth century will be drawn upon, as it is perhaps the most pertinent and convincing account of the way in which 'television by 1990 had retheorized its aesthetic and presentational task' (1995, 4-5). Whilst it has been argued elsewhere in this thesis that Caldwell's definition of televisuality is a useful one in describing earlier television with a distinct, overt presentational style, characterised by visual flourishes and an excessive display of cinematic/videographic aesthetics on television (particularly in chapters two and three of this thesis), it must also be acknowledged that Caldwell's work focuses on a specific moment in US television history. In *Televisuality: Style, Crisis, and Authority in American Television*, Caldwell outlines the complete overhaul of what he termed the era of 'televisuality', relating these seismic changes to transformations of production technologies and programming strategies, as well as reconfigurations of both the organisation of the industry and the role of the audience.

Television has come to flaunt and display style. Programs battle for identifiable style markers and distinct looks in order to gain audience share within the competitive broadcast flow... The stylistic emphasis that emerged during this period resulted from a number of interrelated tendencies and changes: in the industry's mode of production, in programming practice, in the audience and its expectations and in an economic crisis in network television. (ibid., 5)

We might therefore take Caldwell's insistence that television during the late 1980s and 1990s had become increasingly visually distinctive, as well as more self-aware, more artistic, more intelligent, and, in his terms, selectively more cinematic, and think about how these changes impacted on Gothic television in the United States.

Caldwell's *Televisuality* attempts to historicise a particular moment in US television production, charting televisuality's emergence through certain stylistic 'experiments' during the 1950s and 60s, its relative dearth during the formally conservative 1970s, and its heyday in the 1980s with shows such as *Hill Street Blues* (MTM Enterprises Inc., 1981-87) and *Miami Vice* (Universal TV, 1984-89). He argues that this proliferation of televisual shows during the 1980s occurred as a response to the threat posed towards the 'big three' (ABC, CBS, and NBC) by the nascent Fox network and the encroaching presence of cable channels, manifesting the need for distinction in much the same way as the 'major' film studios of 1950s Hollywood had done thirty years earlier: in production extravagance and visual excess². Caldwell asserts that 'special' or event television was produced during this period as a response to competition, and locates a great degree of this programming's stylishness in its signature producers, who functioned as a 'promotional marquee; a spotlight entrée for programming seasons on their respective networks' (ibid., 11). He isolates three kinds of televisual auteurs: the 'showcase producers' offering 'marquee signatures [as] network banner carriers' (e.g. Steve Bochco³ or Brand and Falsey⁴), 'mainstream conversion producers' who 'acquired mannerisms [and] embellished genres' (e.g.

² 'The market incursion of network broadcasters [in the 1950s] had itself created an economic crisis in Hollywood that sent the film studios scrambling for excessively styled forms: Cinemascope, Technicolor, and 3-D' (Caldwell 1995, 11)

³ *Hill Street Blues*, *NYPD Blue* (20th Century Fox Television/Steven Bochco Productions, 1993-2002)

⁴ *St. Elsewhere* (MTM Enterprises Inc., 1982-88), *Northern Exposure* (Universal TV, 1990-95)

Donald Bellasario⁵ and Aaron Spelling⁶), and ‘auteur-imports’ from the cinema who produced ‘cinematic spectacle’ and were seen as ‘visionary émigrés’ (e.g. Steven Spielberg⁷ and David Lynch⁸) (ibid., 16).

In terms of the series at the centre of this analysis, *Millennium* clearly played upon executive producer/writer/director Chris Carter’s status as a ‘showcase producer’ from the outset, with the print ads, published in the national press leading up to the beginning of the series in October 1996, highlighting Carter’s previous success on the Fox network with *The X-Files* by announcing a new series ‘from the creator of *The X-Files*’. In terms of pre-marketing the show, Carter’s reputation, which had been built around the visual stylishness and distinction of *The X-Files*, was a key element in *Millennium*’s attraction to audiences and Fox’s executives alike. As Carter notes, ‘On *The X-Files*, we pushed the limits of darkness, mood and storytelling using the camera, and I wanted to continue to do that with *Millennium*’ (Probst 1996, 46).

American Gothic, on the other hand, offered a production team which might be seen as a mix of ‘mainstream conversion’ and ‘auteur import’. The name most readily associated with the series was that of Shaun Cassidy, who was credited as producer and writer, but might be more accurately viewed as *American Gothic*’s ‘creator’, as the initial concept of the show had also been developed by Cassidy. As a rather unusual ‘mainstream conversion’, Cassidy had moved not from producing ‘mainstream’ television, but starring in it, as Joe Hardy in the hit 1977 TV series *The Hardy Boys Mysteries* (Universal TV, 1977-79); Cassidy’s fame was also associated with his position as a teen heartthrob in the seventies, with a successful pop career. The

⁵ *Magnum P.I.* (Belisarius Production/Glen A. Larson Productions/Universal Television, 1980-88), *Quantum Leap* (Belisarius Productions/Universal TV, 1989-93)

⁶ *Fantasy Island* (Columbia Pictures/Spelling-Goldberg Productions, 1977-84), *Twin Peaks*

⁷ *Amazing Stories* (Amblin Entertainment/Universal TV, 1985-87), *seaQuest dsx* (Amblin Entertainment/Universal TV, 1993-96)

⁸ *Twin Peaks*, *American Chronicles* (Lynch/Frost, 1990)

incongruity of Cassidy's star persona with the stylish and dark *American Gothic* was used as one of the central marketing 'hooks' for the series (this incongruity is discussed at greater length later in this chapter). However, in addition, the role of executive producer on *American Gothic* was credited to Sam Raimi, who had already had a good degree of success with the production of gore-filled horror films such as the *Evil Dead* films (1982 and 1987) and *Darkman* (1990). At the time, Raimi might well have been seen as a 'visionary émigré' within the Gothic/horror genre, although latterly, the producer has become more emphatically associated with historical fantasy on television, acting as executive producer on shows such as *Xena: Warrior Princess* (MCA Television Entertainment Inc./Renaissance Pictures/Studios USA Television/Universal Television, 1995-2001) and the *Hercules* mini-series franchise (MCA Television Entertainment Inc./Renaissance Pictures/Studios USA Television/Universal TV, 1994-99). Caldwell's notion of the producer as a 'promotional marquee' therefore accurately characterises the role of the producer/executive producer in the selling of both *Millennium* and *American Gothic*.

As well as focusing on the role of production personnel, Caldwell also states that this 'special' or 'artistic' television appealed to a 'narrowcast', more discerning audience described in the following terms:

Many viewers expected and watched programs that made additional aesthetic and conceptual demands not evident in earlier programming. Even if such demands came in the form of irony or pastiche, shows... presupposed a certain minimal level of educational, financial, and cultural capital. (1995, 9)

Obviously, this savvy and self-conscious viewer transformed into a lucrative, if not large, audience which the networks could tout to advertisers keen to appeal to the

young, wealthy, culturally astute American, and this would certainly be in keeping with the characterisation of the televisual Gothic viewer offered in the introduction to this chapter in relation to the relative ratings ‘failure’ of both *Millennium* and *American Gothic*. In addition to arguing that the viewer demographic had changed in concurrence with the move towards televisuality, Caldwell also challenged some of the overarching theoretical characterisations of the television audience member within the ‘received knowledge’ of television studies. Put plainly, the image of the distracted audience member who listens to, rather than *views* television, and believes that what they are watching must inherently be occurring ‘live’, simply does not correlate with Caldwell’s re-theorisation of the television text in the 1980s and 90s: he sums this revision up by saying, ‘even if viewers are inattentive, television [in the era of televisuality] works hard visually, not just through aural appeals, to attract the attention of the audience’ (ibid., 27). Implicit in his argument is the fact that the audience of the televisual television of the 1980s and 90s was acutely aware of the level of production involved in the making of television programmes (in terms of budget, time-scale, etc.), and that the programmes themselves contained the potential to enthrall and captivate the viewer, rather than simply attracting a passing glance. Whereas the second chapter of this thesis challenges the ‘distracted viewer’ theory from a much earlier date in relation to Gothic television (one need only look to the restrained, ‘just glimpsed’ quality of the BBC’s *Ghost Story for Christmas* adaptations, for example, to rebuke the notion that television was made for viewers who simply ‘glanced’ at the television set whilst doing other household activities), Caldwell’s argument, that televisual television in the 1980s and 90s was ‘visually recruitist’, is a pertinent one.

Two versions or ‘strains’ of televisual television are described in Caldwell’s analysis: the videographic and the cinematic. Whereas videographic televisuality is more usually associated with non-fictional television genres (news, documentary, etc.), as well as ‘trash’ television competitions and quizzes⁹, it is Caldwell’s notion of the ‘cinematic ecstasies’ (ibid., xi) of television in the 1980s/90s, evoked in chapter three of this thesis in relation to *Riget*’s cinematic identity, which is of interest to this analysis of Gothic television during the era of televisuality on North American television, as it may be seen to accurately describe the ‘stylishness’ of those programs at the centre of this final analysis. Caldwell describes this presentational mode in the following terms.

the cinematic refers, obviously, to a film look in television. Exhibitionist television in the 1980s meant more than shooting on film, however, since many nondescript shows have been shot on film since the 1950s. Rather, cinematic values brought to television spectacle, high production values, and feature style cinematography. (ibid., 12)

Caldwell goes on to argue that the impact of screening feature films on television was in fact one of the contributing factors to this televisual phenomenon: ‘The stylistic impact of [feature film television broadcast] cannot be overestimated. Cinema did not just import programs, it imported a way of seeing narrative and a distinctive way of constructing images’ (ibid., 50).

Both *Millennium* and *American Gothic* fit this description of cinematically televisual television. Both were made for North American television during an era of intensifying competition, both relied on the creative status of those producing to the sell the series (Chris Carter (*Millennium*) and Shaun Cassidy/Sam Raimi (*American*

⁹ Videographic televisuality is described as ‘an appreciation for multiple electronic feeds, image-text

Gothic)), and both demonstrate a highly complex visual aesthetic which fully utilised, and indeed challenged, the production technology available for television production in the United States during the 1990s, enabled by large budgets for serial drama¹⁰; as such, the cinematically stylish televisual Gothic clearly demonstrates a relationship between distinction/showcasing within the television schedule and the Gothic mode or genre. *American Gothic*, for example, has been described by Edward J. Fink as an extremely televisual production: ‘loaded with special effects and costing more than \$1 million per episode, [*American Gothic*] was a high-budget, prime-time network drama’ (1996, 9-10). Fink’s article, detailing the complexities of the creative process behind producing a serial drama such as *American Gothic* during an era of what he describes as a ‘digital revolution’ (ibid., 9), argues that the introduction of digital technology into the programme-making process ‘allows the creative team time to explore more options with special effects’ (ibid., 11) and suggests that ‘the time saved with digital technology is a tremendous advantage in allowing editors to generate more options for shot sequences, effects, and sounds’ (ibid., 14). Therefore, in relation to the argument that there is a clear correlation between innovation, ‘showcasing’, and Gothic television, Fink’s detailed description of the impact of digital technology on the production of *American Gothic* suggests that long-running Gothic television series in the 1990s were more expensive and visually extravagant than television had been previously, and that the production practices and the ‘look’ of this series more closely reflected those of film production, to the end that the Gothic serial’s high production values and inflated expenditure was flaunted through the representation of the supernatural happenings of the narrative.

combinations, videographics, and studios with banks of monitors that evoked video installations.’ (1995, 13)

¹⁰ *American Gothic* was made for an average of \$1 million per episode, and *Millennium* was given an ‘almost unheard of budget for a television program’ (Genge 1997a, 10) at \$1.5 million per episode.

Similarly, the producers of *Millennium* also proclaimed that their modes of production and their visual aesthetic were both innovative and inherently cinematic. Whilst claiming that the production team was pushing the boundaries of television, Chris Carter, David Nutter (director of the 'Pilot' episode and several subsequent instalments), and Peter Wunstorf (director of photography on the 'Pilot') all argued that *Millennium* represented television's move towards the cinematic. Christopher Probst reported the following in *American Cinematographer*:

[f]resh from his resounding success with the paranormal-shock series *The X-Files*, writer/executive producer Chris Carter is determined to push the boundaries of prime-time television's sensibilities even further into uncharted territory with his new show, *Millennium*... Inspired by such psychological thrillers as *Angel Heart*, *Silence of the Lambs*, and *Se7en*, Carter and Nutter set out to find a cinematographer with a fresh eye and the ability to render a look never before seen on television. (1996, 46-47)

As with the Danish serial drama, *Riget/The Kingdom*, *Millennium*'s cinematic-ness was highlighted as a clear point of its distinction from other television drama. Indeed, the slick, cinematic Gothic is knowingly referred to within the mise-en-scène and the dialogue of the 'Pilot', which opens on a sequence set in a strip club reminiscent of a very similar setting in the film *Se7en* (David Fincher, US, 1995), using the track 'Piggies' by the band Nine Inch Nails, whose track 'Closer', also from their album *The Downward Spiral* (1994), was referenced in the title music to *Se7en*. Here the low key lighting, the dark, saturated colours, and the suggestion of filth or degradation within the mise-en-scène, are strikingly similar to the look of *Se7en*'s crime scenes.

Furthermore, later in the same episode, the central protagonist of *Millennium*, Frank Black, also refers to a line spoken by Anthony Hopkins' as Hannibal Lecter in *Silence*

of the Lambs (Jonathan Demme, US, 1991) (in which Lecter claims to have eaten the liver of a census taker ‘with some fava beans and a nice Chianti’); here, Black claims, in the same deadpan tone as Hopkins, that a serial killer prepared human flesh ‘in a skillet, with some onions’. In light of Caldwell’s argument, this rather knowing audio-visual referencing of Gothic cinema of the 1990s might be read as an acknowledgement of the series’ status as cinematic TV.

The questions of exactly how and why these programmes demonstrate this overtly ‘presentational attitude’ (1995, 5) are also addressed in Caldwell’s discussion of televisuality; factors such as the importation of film production personnel and an increasingly cine-literate and demanding audience are cited as reasons why this change occurred, with the author also highlighting a number of production innovations which enabled the cinematic stylishness which he ascribes to North American network television in the 1980s and 90s (new film stocks, electronic/non-linear editing, developments in motion/camera control, etc). To draw this discussion of televisuality to a close, the impact of these innovations on the representation of the supernatural will be considered, returning to the question of whether the cinematic-televisual mode is particularly suited to the presentation of Gothic fictions, and responding to Caldwell’s suggestion that ‘programs could tie acute stylistic looks to alternative narrative worlds’ (ibid., 55).

Perhaps the most obvious point to make in relation to the question of how US television became seen as ‘cinematically stylish’ during the 1980s and 1990s is that this ‘film look’ was reliant, in the first instance, on the use of film stock. During this period, there was a marked increase in filming on film for television, particularly in the genres of primetime dramatic programming and commercial advertising. However, as Caldwell has argued, shooting television programmes on film was not a new

phenomenon (see above). Rather, innovations in the quality and type of available film stock had led to an increased use of film in television production.

As the aesthetic and formal possibilities offered by film increased, the popularity of shooting on film increased. Film-tape manufacturers argued that certain TV scripts in fact call for “quality production values that are more appropriate for film”, especially any genre requiring “fantasy” rather than “immediacy” [quote from Eastman Kodak executive]. (ibid., 84)

This claim, that the development of new film stocks responded to a demand from television directors of photography for increased picture quality and, most importantly for this analysis, the ability to create fantastic, as well as realistic, worlds, is clearly suggesting that the relationship between particular genres (e.g. the Gothic) and innovation in modes of representation is complex, a kind of ‘chicken and egg’ relationship. The suggestion from the Kodak representative is that those developing new film stocks are at least aware of the demands of ‘fantastic’ or supernatural television shows, if they are not in fact developing the stocks with these kinds of productions expressly in mind. Caldwell goes on to note that the ability to shoot a new kind of darkness on television was seen by production personnel as a sign of prestige:

When primetime DPs [directors of photography] boasted that “of course, not everything on television is shot at ten footcandles [e.g. at an extremely low light]”, they were both showing off that they could shoot primetime at that unheard of level of darkness and also making stark contrasts to earlier, prestige production stocks. (ibid., 84)

Clearly, this darkness is demanded at no time more so than in the production of Gothic television; the darkness of *Millennium*’s rain-soaked Seattle is a distinct testament to

this. As Catherine Johnson (2000) has argued in her analysis of Chris Carter's earlier series, *The X-Files* (which, in itself, may be read as a convergence of the sci-fi thriller with the supernatural Gothic), it is precisely this burgeoning darkness which both provides the series with its signature 'look' and also indicates the series' sense of quality or prestige. Carter reinforced this association of darkness with quality (and also cinematic-ness) in an interview for *American Cinematographer* coinciding with the transmission of the 'Pilot':

In this genre, there's a tendency to go with surreal lighting techniques: macabre, high-key, glowing stuff. But I wanted the new show to be as real as possible, to create natural lighting situations – no fake sources – while keeping it good and dark and cinematic. (Probst 1996, 46)

Caldwell also goes on to argue that the new film stocks 'allowed a new level of visual detail in front of the camera' (1995, 86), which, it might be suggested, had an impact on the possibilities of production design, facilitating visually denser and more complex sets/locations. The Gothic television series of the United States in the 1990s could subsequently be described as rich texts, the mise-en-scène of which is as readily open to analysis as each individual narrative's story and dialogue. Indeed, *Millennium's* original production designer, Gary Wissner, who also worked on the film *Se7en*, consulted contemporary Gothic photographic art to influence this 'new level of visual detail' in the series' mise-en-scène and 'pored over volumes of books, including the works of photographers Robert Frank and Joel-Peter Witkin (particularly Witkin's compilation of crime scene photography, entitled *Harms Way*)' (Probst 1996, 47). The influence of Witkin's collection of grainy, early twentieth century crime photographs can clearly be seen in the production design of *Millennium*, as can the influence of Wissner's previous work on *Se7en*.

In addition to this proposal of the televisual programme's visual complexity on the level of mise-en-scène, Caldwell also discusses the way in which advances in editing techniques had enabled a greater level of experimentation in the post-production processes of television manufacture, allowing for the creation of 'hyperactive and visually dense' (1995, 81) television images. In the televisual era, non-linear and random access electronic editing systems, according to Caldwell's analysis, 'encouraged, or fed, the televisual appetite for stylistic volatility and infinite formal permutations' (ibid., 82-3), leading to the kind of densely layered images and montage-style flashbacks and flashforwards which may be seen as characteristic of Gothic television in the 1990s. This 'visually dense' layering of images is particularly evident in both *American Gothic* and *Millennium*, in the rendering of supernatural subjectivity or other 'psychical' points of view (dream sequences, flashbacks, premonitions, hallucinations, 'second sight', etc.), at moments in which both series utilise the fast edited montage and image layering techniques to make the image noticeably 'strange' (this, in fact, is a more technically complex version of the flashback montage discussed in chapters three and four of this thesis). As Fink describes, 'On *American Gothic*, a single image might have consisted of four or more layers of composited video' (1996, 14).

Throughout *American Gothic*, most of the central characters are linked to at least one of these sequences of supernatural point of view. In the 'Pilot' episode of *American Gothic* for example, one of the first of these hyper-dense sequences takes place as Caleb Temple's cousin Gail (Paige Turco) arrives in town to look after her newly orphaned relative. During the course of the episode the viewer learns that Gail is herself an orphan, having lost both her parents in a fire at the Trinity Guardian (their work place), an event which, it is implied, somehow involved the sinister Sheriff. As

Gail kneels at her parents' graveside, two fast edited sequences of images are interspersed with her facial close-up, these interspersals suggesting that the montages come from her subjective position, according to the grammar of point of view. The following shot list outlines the fifty-four second sequence:

Shot One: (A mournful piece of orchestral music, played on violins and wind instruments continues through each shot, to shot fourteen.) Facial close-up of Gail talking to her parents' graves: 'I always wanted to come back. Guess I was just too afraid' (7 sec.)

Shot Two: (Sounds of wind and echoing screams continue to shot six.)

Long shot of the Temple's house at night as lightning flashes (0.8 sec.)

Shot Three: Eye-level exterior tracking shot towards the window of Merlyn's bedroom (0.8 sec.)

Shot Four: Repeat shot two (0.8 sec.)

Shot Five: Jump cut to medium long shot of the same as lightning strikes (0.8 sec.)

Shot Six: Dissolve to medium close-up of Caleb which slowly dissolves (0.8 sec.)

Shot Seven: Repeat shot one: 'There's a little boy here who's in the same situation I was and he's going to have a lot of questions. Questions I don't think I can answer. Maybe if I understood what happened to you' (24 sec.)

Shot Eight: (Sounds of breaking glass and fire continue to shot eleven) Extreme close-up of a grave stone, with a partial US flag visible behind (0.4 sec.)

Shot Nine: Long distance travelling shot of a sunset through trees (0.6 sec.)

Shot Ten: Extreme close-up of a photo in a frame of a family in front of the Trinity Guardian store front dissolves to shot eleven (0.6 sec.)

Shot Eleven: Extreme close-up of fire (0.6 sec.)

Shot Twelve: Repeat shot one: 'I need to know the truth. Please help me' (8 sec.)

Shot Thirteen: Symmetrical medium shot from behind Gail of her kneeling in front of the graves – a small US flag sits behind her father's grave (3 sec.)

Shot Fourteen: Repeat shot one: "Cause this time I'm not leaving 'til I find it' (6 sec.)



Fig. 4.1: The dissolve as psychic point-of-view

This short sequence introduces techniques which are commonly used throughout the series, the psychical point of view sections (shots two to six, and eight to eleven) utilising patterns of quick cutting (none of the images from Gail's 'mind' are held longer than a second, most are held for a fraction of that time), and dissolves (shots six

to seven (see fig. 4.1) and ten to eleven). to suggest both confusion and a kind of 'sixth sense'. Later in the series other formally disruptive techniques such as the use of slow-motion, stop-motion photography, colour distortion, blue-screen shooting, and negative images are all combined during sequences of supernatural subjectivity, particularly when assigned to Sheriff Buck, the suggestion being that his supernatural/evil 'power' can be conveyed in the 'strangeness' of his sight. when the rules of continuity editing and film processing in the television drama are temporarily broken. Here, in the graveyard, Gail experiences images which either she did not witness, but the audience did (e.g. the shots of Caleb's house at the time of Merlyn's murder (shots two to six)), or images which she 'remembers' from the series' back story, which the audience have not witnessed (the family portrait (shot ten) and the fire (shot eleven)). Therefore, these unusual point of view sequences have multiple purposes within the structure of the narrative: they suggest supernatural or psychical sight (premonitions, the 'evil eye', hallucinations, etc.); they allow for the incorporation of images which are not directly linked to narrative events, but which speak to the narrative on a thematic level (such as the recurrence of the raven motif in Sheriff Buck's point of view sequences, suggesting a satanic evil); and they act as kind of story telling 'shorthand' whereby unseen parts of the back story may be sketchily 'filled in' (see shots eight to eleven in the above sequence), or earlier parts of the narrative may be economically recapped (see shots two to six in the above sequence). This latter use of the psychical montage sequence becomes particularly useful towards the later episodes of a long running, twenty-two-week series, in that a 'previously on *American Gothic*' sequence can be integrated into the diegetic space and time, notably in episode sixteen, 'Dr. Death Takes a Holiday', under the auspices of Dr. Matt Crower's (Jake Weber), ensuing madness, whereby a lengthy montage of images from

the series is interspersed with images of pictorial depictions of the devil. Here, it can be argued, generic conventions of Gothic television and the conventions of the serial drama format come together.

In *Millennium*, on the other hand, the use of this supernatural point of view sequence is even more prevalent, and provides what Chris Carter has described as 'the visual conceit of the show'.¹¹ Here, Carter implies that these psychological points of view provide *Millennium* with the visual distinctiveness which is essential to a programme's success within the era of televisuality. These sequences are used frequently in the show to connote three different subjective positions: the telepathy/second sight of the central protagonist, Frank Black, a kind of super-empathy with the killer's own point of view as he 'detects' snippets of details of crimes, by visiting crime scenes and victims; the terrified point of view of the victims, whom, it is suggested by the brokenness of these sequences, have been frightened out of 'coherent' sight; and the subjectivity of the criminal mind, which, it is implied, is either too sick or too evil to see as 'normal' humans do. As with *American Gothic*, the sequences in *Millennium* are also marked by a kind of formal experimentation or disruption not seen elsewhere in the series, using innovative production techniques to render the psychological point of view as 'othered' within the Gothic narrative structure. In the 'Pilot', for example, these sequences were shot on 16 mm Video News film¹² (although other film, video, and photographic stocks were experimented with later in the series), a film usually used for news or documentary filming which gave the sequences a rough, grainy quality as opposed to the slick, filmic-looking 35mm footage used for the main

¹¹ Taken from an interview which precedes the 'Pilot' on its commercial video release in the UK (released by 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment on the 26th January, 1998).

¹² Eastman Kodak 7240 and 7250 Ektachrome colour reversal film, most commonly used for news and documentary filming.

narrative¹³. Peter Wunstorf, director of photography on the ‘Pilot’ episode of *Millennium*, describes a system of ‘in camera’ edits that made these sequences appear jumpy and distorted:

The killer doesn’t see the world the way the rest of us do, so I had to figure out how to make his point of view different... During filming we would start and stop the camera, creating a lot of flash frames and providing edit points... We felt this would be an effective way to give a distorted point of view without going over the top. (Probst 1997, 74)

Here the experimentation with film stocks and shooting processes, as detailed above, both creates a ‘visual conceit’ for the series (as suggested by Carter), and marks out a moment of narrative interpolation, a standard device of the Gothic narrative referred to elsewhere in this thesis, wherein the central narrative perspective is interrupted by another. For instance, in the ‘Pilot’ episode of *Millennium*, the first interpolation of supernatural subjectivity comes as Frank Black stands over the body of the dead stripper (Kimm Wakefield).



Fig. 4.2: Seeing what the killer sees



Fig. 4.3: Seeing what the killer sees

¹³ Using Eastman Kodak EXR 5293 for day interior and exterior shots and 5298 for the night-time interiors and exteriors.



Fig. 4.4: Seeing what the killer sees

As Black prevents the mortician from opening the body bag, a cut is made from a low angle medium shot of him barely looking at the body to a series of images, edited ‘in camera’ and accompanied by screams and the sound of breaking glass, of the young woman struggling against the camera (representing the position of the killer), lasting only a second (see figs. 4.2-4.3), followed by a return shot of Black’s face in close-up, and then a second stilted sequence, this time accompanied by heavy breathing and showing the blood spattered carpet and the top of the stripper’s face, again lasting only a second (see fig. 4.4); following the second sequence, a cut is made back to Black, in close-up, as he mutters ‘She was decapitated’. It will be argued, in the conclusion of this chapter that this sequence, and the other moments of supernatural subjectivity in *Millennium*, serve to suggest, rather than graphically depict, extreme violence.

However, in the context of this analysis of the formal experimentation and ‘stylishness’ of the televisual Gothic, we can view sequences such as the one described above, as evidencing the conjunction of expressivity and innovation within the audio visual Gothic narrative.

Finally, the other important technological developments in relation to the representation of the supernatural within the televisual Gothic television of the 1990s

are those which can be described under the umbrella term ‘motion control’. These devices, such as computer programmed cameras, Steadicam, Camrail, robotic controlled studio cameras, jib arms, and motorised cranes, are, according to Caldwell, ‘all alike in one important way: they physically take the camera away from the camera operator’s eyes and move it through space in very fluid ways’ (1995, 80). The impact of this kind of movement is that it lends itself to the representation of a subjectivity which is, in Caldwell’s words, ‘eerily non-human’ (ibid., 80). Through computer/robotic/motorised operation, subjectivity is dislocated from actual human subjectivity and thus, within the realm of Gothic television particularly, can be more easily aligned to super-human or supernatural sight. One might therefore argue that this technology is taken to its natural conclusion on Gothic television, whether through the representation of ghosts, demons or other supernatural beings, or through the depiction of a psychical rather than physical terrain. Indeed, if, as Caldwell argues ‘the televisual image no longer seems to be anchored by the comforting, human eye-level view of the pedestal-mounted camera, but floats like the eye of a cyborg’ (ibid., 18), one might quite easily replace his cyborg analogy with that of the spirit, and read these developments in motion control as developments in the possibility of representing the supernatural. This technique is very much pronounced in *American Gothic*, both in the evocation of Merlyn Temple’s angelic spirit and in the suggestion of Sheriff Buck’s supernatural omnipotence over the town of Trinity. In the ‘Pilot’ episode, for example, as Caleb visits his sister’s body in the hospital’s mortuary, a swooping, extremely mobile camera suggests the presence of her spirit as a non-human subjectivity and is accompanied by the sound of rushing wind¹⁴; indeed, later in the episode this is even more pronounced as Merlyn’s spirit wakes Caleb from his sleep by calling to him.

¹⁴ N.B. A similar moment occurs in *Riget/The Kingdom*, discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

cutting between a 'floating' camera and fast-motion montages of their house and the surrounding countryside.



Fig. 4.5: An angel's point-of-view

During these sequences a highly mobile, high angle camera is used to portray the subjectivity of an angel (see fig. 4.5); conversely, in the third episode of the series, 'Eye of the Beholder', soaring helicopter shots are used to imply the presence of a malignant supernatural or superhuman subjectivity, looking down on the car of the anaesthetist whom Sheriff Buck is harassing. Therefore, the translation of 'eerily non-human' subjectivity is yet another marker of the age of televisuality, and Gothic television fully utilises the uncanny possibilities of these technological capacities, the genre 'showcasing' the possibilities of the medium within the bounds of its own conventions (the translation of supernatural subjectivity).

As much of Caldwell's wide-ranging analysis was written during the early 1990s, he does not address an important innovation in television production technology which takes cinematically-televisual television on to another level in the latter half of the decade: the computer generated image [CGI]. The introduction of this digital technology, whereby computer generated images are relatively easily integrated

into the ‘real world’ of a programme, has revolutionised the possibilities of representation on television, allowing for the ‘believable’ depiction of the fantastic/supernatural, along with being employed within more traditionally realist or non-fictional genres (e.g. the fantasy flourishes of romantic comedy *Ally McBeal* (20th Century Fox Television/David E. Kelley Productions, 1997-2002) or the recreation of dinosaurs for the BBC’s natural history program, *Walking with Dinosaurs* (BBC1/Pro 7, 1999)). As well as leading to further specialisation (and subsequent fragmentation) within the television production industry (studios are often employed by producers to produce their particular ‘speciality’ effects¹⁵), the use of CGI may be seen as evidence of both television’s increasing budgets, which, at over one million dollars per episode of a major Gothic drama serial, are moving ever closer to those of their feature-film counterparts, and the increasing ‘draw’ of visually spectacular television with a certain cinematic stylishness for the television viewer.

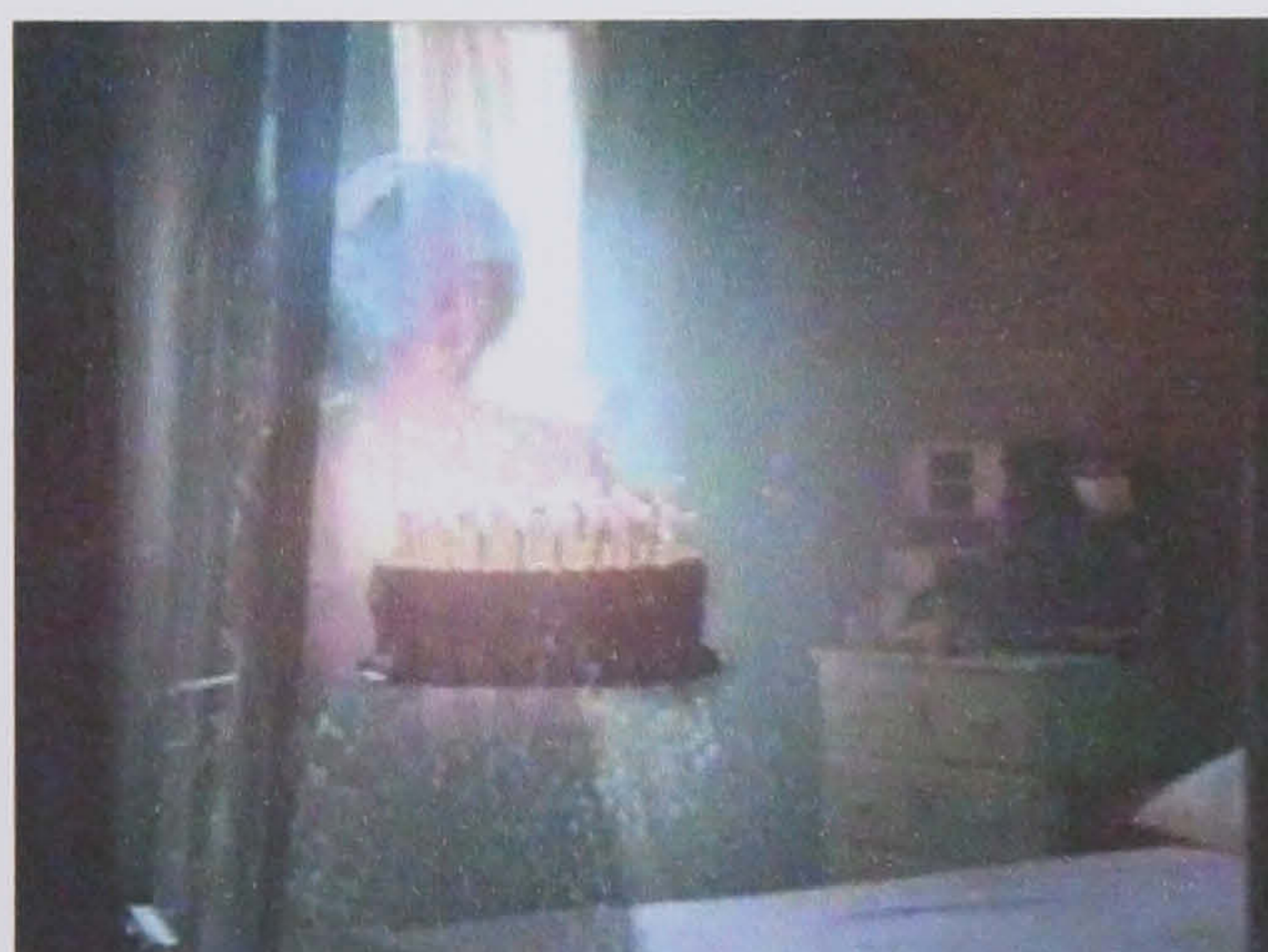


Fig. 4.6: Bringing the dead to life

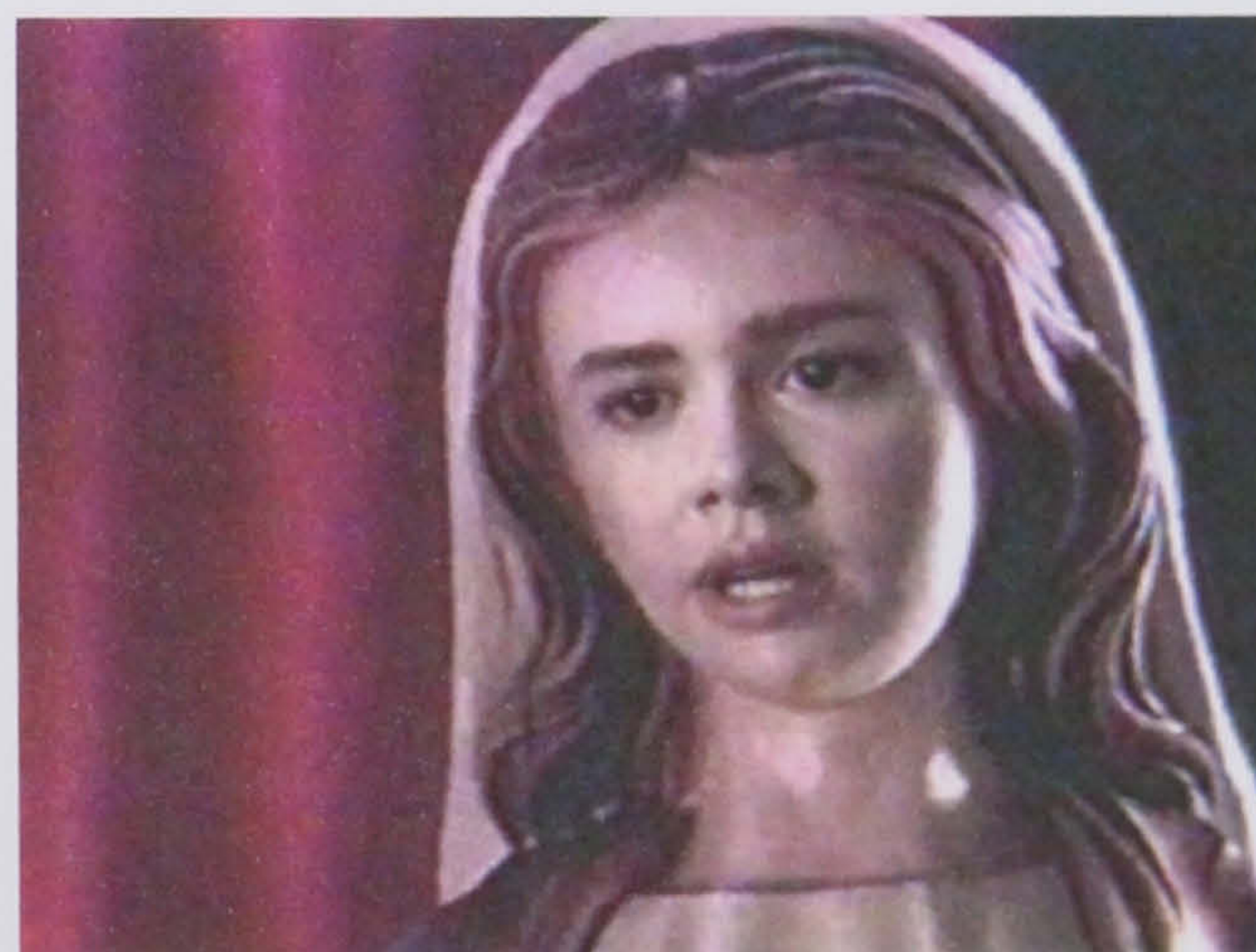


Fig. 4.7: Animating the inanimate

CGI effects in *American Gothic*, for example, include the ‘materialisation’ as if from nowhere, of Merlyn’s angel-spirit (see fig. 4.6), or the morphing of her face onto

¹⁵ For example, the special effects company Vision Art in Los Angeles were employed by the makers of *American Gothic* solely for the purpose of creating the computer-generated ‘molecular’ effect of Merlyn’s spirit’s exits and entrances, whereby her body gradually appears, molecule by molecule, on screen (see fig. 4.6)

various other characters and objects (see, for example, the sequence in the episode 'Inhumanitas', in which she 'possesses' the statue of the Virgin Mary (fig. 4.7)). These can be seen as uncanny techniques whereby the dead appear from out of the ether, and inanimate objects are brought 'to life' (and are therefore a direct visualisation of the automata or 'living dolls' which Freud located as a key source of the uncanny in his essay on the subject (Freud 1990, 347-355)). Here, as in the examples of other programmes given above, CGI is both built into the narrative (in this case the rendering of the Gothic-uncanny) and given as sophisticated stylistic flourish, differentiating *American Gothic* from other television dramas. However, the argument of this chapter is not that the televisual Gothic of the 1990s, through its use of the cinematic style outlined by Caldwell, and its heavy use of special effects (computer generated or otherwise), is indistinguishable from its filmic points of reference (*Se7en*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *The Gift* (Sam Raimi, US, 2000), etc.), but rather that these series utilised a level of stylishness and visual showcasing, more usually associated with the cinema, to television-specific ends. By this it is meant that innovative, formally experimental techniques and relatively expensive special/computer generated effects are used to convey Gothic narratives that are still very much specific to the domestic viewing context. This chapter has begun by discussing the specific formal qualities of the televisual Gothic in 1990s North America; subsequently, the rest of this chapter will now turn towards a discussion of its content, and the nationally specific context of the American Gothic narrative.

American Gothic and the family narrative

The house is haunted by the echo of your last goodbye.

The house is haunted by the memories that refuse to die,

I can't get away from a vision that brings intimate glimpses of intimate things.

A voice in my heart like a torch singer sings I wonder who's kissing her now

‘The House is Haunted (By the Echo of Your Last Goodbye)’ (1934)

Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra¹⁶

The central theme of this thesis is that the Gothic mode is well suited to the medium of television, in that the Gothic narrative holds a certain preoccupation with the home and domestic space. The previous chapter, examining the female Gothic narrative on British television, commented on the congruence between the domestic spaces represented on screen and the intended viewing contexts of television, noting the deployment of formal and narrative techniques through which the symmetries between these two spaces may be emphasised. In this final chapter, examining the Gothic on US television in the last decade, this relationship between text and context will be read in the light of a nationally specific narrative, firstly looking at the family as a central and defining construct in the American Gothic, and then looking specifically at anxieties around family viewing which Gothic television has raised in the United States and elsewhere. However, in order to embark on such an analysis, it is first necessary to outline the divergent descriptions of the American Gothic as they stand within Gothic scholarship.

¹⁶ Played in the *American Gothic* episode, ‘Echo of Your Last Goodbye’.

It is widely agreed, in those accounts which seek to offer a genealogy of the Gothic in North America, that whilst related in a structural sense, the American Gothic is distinguishable from its European counterpart, preoccupied with different concerns. This view, that the transferral of a European Gothic into the 'New World' led to a reassessment or transformation of the genre, is characterised by Teresa A. Goddu: 'the American Gothic consists of a less coherent set of conventions [than the European Gothic]. Its more flexible form challenges the critically unified Gothic genre and demands a reassessment of the Gothic's parameters' (1997, 4). The precise nature of this challenge or reassessment is what Gothic scholarship continues to contest, however. Many see the changes to Gothic conventions as coming from a reading of the American Gothic as a postcolonial genre. As Jeanette Idiart and Jennifer Schulz explain,

American Gothic literature reflects the "haunted consciousness" of the nation: the awareness that at the heart of its governing text [the US constitution] are contradictions that threaten to unveil American democracy as a fiction. These texts bring to the surface the knowledge that the founding value of the Constitution, equality, is predicated on the exclusion of selected populations on the basis of race, gender and property. (1999, 127)

Here it is the political anxieties of the United States, questions of national guilt and conspiracy, the treatment of Native American peoples, the legacy of slavery, and, latterly, American foreign policy, which dominate our understanding of the American Gothic. Indeed, both series at the centre of this analysis take up narratives of national guilt within individual episodes. In *Millennium*, for example, a narrative dealing with a displaced Native American tribe features in the second season episode 'A Single Blade

of Grass', whereas 'The Thin White Line' (episode fourteen, season one) deals with a serial killer who learnt his trade in Vietnam¹⁷. *American Gothic*, set in the deep south of South Carolina, is particularly impregnated with images and echoes of the African American slave past, most obviously reflected in the mise-en-scène of Caleb's boarding house (where he stays after becoming orphaned), run by Miss Holt (Tina Lifford), a black woman who collects traditional African artefacts and keeps books full of family histories.

However, whilst the depiction of the American Gothic as a postcolonial narrative of national guilt is compelling, there are others who see the national Gothic narrative as far more quotidian, with the American Gothic being firmly centred around images of the family and familial trauma: this is the American Gothic which appears on television in the United States in the 1990s. Henry James proclaimed in 1865 that American Gothic literature was 'connected at a hundred points with the common objects of life' (quoted in Davenport-Hines 1998, 267), and contemporary critics have also taken up James' stance. Fred Botting, for example, characterises the early American Gothic as a 'domestication' of the European Gothic:

the bourgeois family is the scene of ghostly return, where guilty secrets of past transgression and uncertain class origins are the sources of anxiety... Though the grand gloom of European Gothic was inappropriate, the commonplace of American culture was full of little mysteries and guilty secrets from communal and family pasts. (1996, 114-5)

Botting goes on to detail the ways in which the canonical texts of the American Gothic, such as Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* (1798), Nathaniel Hawthorne's

¹⁷ Indeed, the two later seasons of *Millennium* return to government conspiracy theories as their central

The House of the Seven Gables (1851), and Edgar Allen Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher' (1834), all focus on familial psychodramas. In that each of these key texts take the ancestral home as their setting and their narratives focus on the resurfacing of family-based guilt. Richard Davenport-Hines also argues that in comparison to the European Gothic, Gothic narratives in the United States became far more 'family centred' (1998, 267), in response to the nation's more idealised depictions of family life:

as Americans adopted a specialised, even extremist veneration of family, some of their writers adapted Gothic imagery to exemplify the destructive power of families. Gothic excess was deployed to represent domesticity's extreme horrors... In American Gothic the "isolated puritan country household"... replaced Europe's "brawling and childish and quite deadly mud castle household in a miasmic and spirit-ridden forest" as the locus of horror. (ibid.)

In Davenport-Hines' terms, this veneration of the American family created an almost inevitable fictional response, in the exposure of the American family's underside. This is not to suggest that notions of home and family are unimportant to European versions of the Gothic narrative (chapters two and four of this thesis have explicitly argued that this is not the case). However, perhaps the most striking characteristic of the American Gothic version of the domestic narrative is its relationship to the quotidian, the everyday. These are not the stately, ancestral homes or dynasties of well-to-do families of the European Gothic but haunted houses and troubled families of a more ordinary kind. It will be argued during the latter half of this chapter that these everyday homes

narrative (and are therefore more in line with Carter's other series, *The X-Files*).

and families are no more evident than in the televisual Gothic drama series of the 1990s.

In North American culture, this ‘other side’ of the American Dream is often represented regionally, in an association with the southern states of America. Goddu, for example, writes that ‘identified with Gothic doom and gloom, the American South serves as the nation’s “other”, becoming the repository for everything from which the nation wants to disassociate itself’ (1997, 3-4), and A. Robert Lee concurs, going on to suggest that this regional Gothic is also very much associated with the house as a location and the family as a focal point. Taking ‘The Fall of the House of Usher’ as the Southern Gothic’s ‘founding text’ (1998, 217), Lee argues that Poe’s story offers

a long supposed perfect Gothic image of “The South”, the Deep South that is, shot through with brooding family darkness and a deeply inward sense of the past as burden... Here, indeed, was another kind of American “house” replete with its ghosts, inverted desire and gentility of a kind. (ibid., 217-218)

The series *American Gothic* clearly plays on this association of the ‘Deep South’ with the Gothic representation of the family and the family home (see below for a fuller analysis of *American Gothic*’s family-Gothic narrative), and again, certain individual episodes of *Millennium* also evoke this milieu¹⁸. However, it will be argued that within the televisual Gothic of the 1990s, the depiction of Gothic America extends beyond the southern states, to take in the rest of the US.

To return to Richard Davenport-Hines’ suggestion, that the American Gothic, with its familial preoccupations, is somehow a manifestation of the ‘underside’ of the American dream, we might look to the ways in which the televisual Gothic of the

1990s demonstrates an awareness of the duality of American family life. In a review of the ‘Pilot’ episode of *American Gothic*, Alkarim Jivani describes this awareness precisely:

Now that the American dream has turned into a waking nightmare, the accoutrements of that idealised world – white picket fences, rolling green lawns and wooden swings on the porch – have come to signify exactly the opposite of what they used to. Instead of representing a straightforward, simple existence, they denote an outer normality which conceals an inner nastiness. (1996, 157)

In the opening sequence of the *American Gothic* ‘Pilot’, in which Sheriff Buck’s voice-over is played over a sunny, soft focus montage of quotidian activity in Trinity, the town in which the series is set (see figs. 4.8-4.9), this conflict between the surface and the ‘underside’ of the American dream is dramatised.



Fig. 4.8: The American Dream



Fig. 4.9: The American Dream

As the camera pans past these very picket fences and wooden swings, an image of small-town bliss and neighbourly (racial) harmony is created, established in order to

¹⁸ In the first season, see particularly the episode ‘The Wild and the Innocent’, set in Missouri and

make the following sequence, in which Buck enters the Temple house and murders the young Merlyn, all the more shocking. During this montage, Sheriff Buck ironically offers the following monologue:

Now I've heard it said that the American Dream is a thing of the past.

That the basic tenets of home, job, and family are slipping away. Well,

not in my town. Where I come from that dream is still a reality. 'Course,

you have to know who's boss.

This opening of the series therefore draws precisely on the aforementioned duality of images of domestic perfection and familial harmony; here the picket fences and housewives sweeping their front porches represent the façade of American idealism in relation to the concurrent negative images of domestic and family life characteristic of this nationally specific Gothic genre. In the context of *American Gothic*, this duality is immediately presented to the viewer as the episode cuts from the opening montage to the establishing shot of the Temple's house. At this point a sunny long shot of the family home is quickly transformed, through stop-motion photography, into a dark, night-time image of the same, in a matter of a couple of seconds. If the house may be read as a metonym for 'family' and its associated values, then this short sequence visualises both sides of the American dream as presented in the American Gothic: the sunny façade and its dark underside.

The basic premise of the series, established from the outset, is very much in keeping with the definition of the American Gothic delineated above, as a genre immersed in the guilty secrets of family pasts and the conflict between family life as it appears and as it actually *is*; rather unsurprisingly, *American Gothic* presents the classic American Gothic narrative. In the series, the ongoing story of the Temple

focusing on abused teenager Maddie Haskell (Heather McComb) who flees an abusive stepfather in

family reflects this preoccupation. During the series' twenty-two week run, the viewer learns that Caleb is Sheriff Buck's illegitimate son, conceived as Caleb's mother was raped and his sister was traumatised by witnessing the event. In the 'Pilot' episode, Caleb's father (the man who raised him) attacks his own daughter, Merlyn, whose mental state means she cannot stop reliving this traumatic event, and then is arrested by Sheriff Buck, who secretly finishes off the father's attack by killing Merlyn himself. In prison, Caleb's father is goaded into suicide by Buck who, it appears, has a supernatural ability to control others, and Caleb runs from the Sheriff under the guidance of his sister's spirit, pursued by Buck and also his cousin Gail and Dr. Matt Crower, all of whom want to look after him.



Fig. 4.10: The broken home

Throughout the series, the impact of the events of the 'Pilot' episode continue to shape the narrative, thus keeping the familial past at the centre of *American Gothic*, and even within the 'Pilot' the back story of family trauma is reconstructed when Caleb runs away from Sheriff Buck and back to his family home. As he re-enters the house, the mise-en-scène reflects the traumatic events associated with the family in this series;

search of her kidnapped baby.

the rooms already lie in a state of decay, and the smashed birthday cake, lying amidst shards of glass and crockery on the floor, must be read as symbolic of the broken home and the dissolution of the American Dream within the Gothic genre (see fig. 4.10).

During Caleb's return home, the angelic spirit of Caleb's dead sister appears with a perfect, candle-laden birthday cake, and proceeds to reveal to Caleb what family life was like before his mother's rape. At this point in the narrative, the living room is transformed, using the computer generated 'molecular' effect which also brings about Merlyn's materialisation, into the happy family home it once was, in order to show Caleb how he was conceived (and to fill in some more of the back story for the viewer) (see fig. 4.11).



Fig. 4.11: The materialisation of the ideal home

With Caleb superimposed in the left hand foreground of the shot, the degraded living room behind him is transformed into a warmly lit, soft-focus image of Caleb's mother reading to his sister as a young girl, creating an image of 'family' more suited to a TV

‘movie of the week’ or situation comedy¹⁹. However, as the Sheriff arrives and proceeds to attack his mother, the camera movements become more frenzied, with whip pans and fast zooms undercutting the apparently idyllic image of home until Caleb screams ‘No!’ and closes his eyes, thus dissolving the image. This audio-visual reconstruction of the moment of family trauma therefore acts as a dramatisation of the central conceit of the American Gothic: that perfection of the home is only found on the surface, and that families are continually threatened by the exposure of grisly ancestral secrets.

Throughout the series, Merlyn continues to return after her death as Caleb’s guardian angel, to protect him from the evil which, it is implied, lies dormant in Caleb’s soul due to his genetic parentage, and which may be awoken by the influence of Sheriff Buck in his life. As such, this series is very much focused upon not only the struggle between good and evil, but also the struggle to overcome genetically inherited behaviour; whereas Sheriff Buck as a father figure presents Caleb with a set of innate supernatural abilities and a proclivity towards evil, Dr. Crower and other ‘good’ characters (Merlyn, Miss Holt, etc.) present a highly moral version of family and child rearing, in which care triumphs over genetics. In essence, the story of *American Gothic* is the story of the conflict between inherited and learned behaviour. Beginning with the ‘Pilot’ episode, this struggle is represented in a rather simplistic duality between two characters, illustrated in the moment when Sheriff Buck says disdainfully to Dr. Crower, ‘You’re a good man’. At this point the camera cuts to a new position behind the Sheriff’s shoulder which emphasises the contrast between their costumes (Crower in a white lab coat, Buck in a heavy black overcoat), thus dividing the frame in half and visually highlighting the conflict between these two figures. Here, the

¹⁹ The significance of this generic comparison will be dealt with more thoroughly in the closing section

American Gothic is presented as a morality tale, in which the issues of family, paternity, and inheritance are played out, and in which concerns over genetics replace the more usual European Gothic preoccupation with issues of monetary inheritance (see *The Woman in White* or *The Wyvern Mystery*, for example).

Subsequently, as with the more usual depictions of the family on North American television, most notably in the family centred sit-com genre, a highly conservative and morally idealistic notion of 'family' and 'care' is implied, even within a genre which highlights the 'other side' of family life. The episodic structure of the series not only allows for the presentation of an extended narrative of guilt and fear surrounding the Temple family however, but also introduces weekly storylines which focus on the trauma of other families in Trinity which are being manipulated by the satanic forces of Sheriff Buck, each episode providing a self-contained American Gothic parable. For example, in the fourth episode, 'Damned If You Don't', the Brown family are taunted by Buck through the reappearance of Wash Sutpen (Muse Watson), who is let out of prison after killing a man who he believed had had sex with his daughter. When Sheriff Buck tells Sutpen that Carter Brown (Steve Rankin) was in fact the man having an affair with his daughter, the released man threatens to do the same to Brown's own daughter and eventually goads Brown into killing his own wife. Again, in later episodes, families are torn apart by guilty secrets ('Dead to the World', 'Potato Boy', 'To Hell and Back', 'Dr. Death Takes a Holiday'), broken family oaths ('Inhumanitas'), infidelity ('Resurrector'), and domestic violence ('The Plague Sower'), stock Gothic narratives based around the family which are applied to the serial format to run the gamut of the American Gothic. In these episodes and others, as

in the meta-narrative of *American Gothic*, the family is constantly depicted as the site of past transgressions and a traumatic revisitation of history.

Millennium: Strangers in the House

Whilst the family-centred serial and episodic narratives of *American Gothic* are instantly recognisable as American Gothic narratives, and are set within the regionally specific milieu of the American south, drawing on plots, characterisations and imagery which are easily identifiable within nationally-specific Gothic convention, *Millennium* may, at first glance at least, seem somewhat more elusive in terms of generic categorisation. Essentially a crime investigation series, *Millennium* developed from season to season, and latterly became more immediately associated with Carter's own brand of paranoid, government-conspiracy narrative, and his earlier show, *The X-Files*. However, if one looks to the first season of *Millennium*, in which the boundaries of the series' generic identity were initially set out, the focus is again placed on the threatened American family, plagued by monstrous villains and guilty secrets, a focus which, it has been argued, has become characteristic of the American Gothic. However, whilst *American Gothic* takes the threat to the American family as coming from within its own confines, *Millennium*, for the most part, is concerned with narratives of domestic invasion, in which the home and the family unit are seen as prey for external forces of evil, most often in the form of the most common Gothic villain of the twentieth century: the serial killer, or that figure which Christoph Grunenberg, in his delineation of the Gothic in 1990s North America, described as 'one of the most popular categories in mainstream entertainment' (1997, 210). Whilst all three seasons of the show focused on Frank Black's investigation of serial killing

and serial killers, the first season of *Millennium* concentrated most fully on these figures and the threat which they posed to the sanctity of 'normal' family life (and particularly the detective's own family); as such, the beginnings of the series, which clearly played upon the family centred anxieties of the American Gothic narrative, call for an examination of the ways in which Gothic television evidences an awareness of its viewing contexts and its potential viewers.²⁰

As well as concentrating on the grisly detail of serial killers and their victims, *Millennium* focuses on the home life of detective Frank Black, and in doing so it 'sets up the stakes' of domestic invasion within the American Gothic narrative. From the outset of the series, the viewer is presented with an image of Black's home and family life which is almost allegoric in its idealistic representation; as Richard Dyer notes,

just as in the Westerns and gangster films of yore, home is the realm of normal reproductive sexuality at stake in the hero's engagement with the killer's abnormal destructive world. He is protecting home from what the killer represents, doing his bit to make the world safe for women and children. The potential invasion of the home is the deepest anxiety in...

Millennium (where it provides a running weekly cliff-hanger). (1997, 17)

Dyer's comparison with Westerns and gangster films is telling; as in these filmic genres, *Millennium* presents an image of family life which is almost mythic in its sanctity and 'goodness' (unlike the homes of *American Gothic* which are disordered by the familial past). Here the duality of the American Gothic, the simultaneous appearance of an ideal (in this case an ideal home) and the acknowledgement that this ideal is neither stable nor safe, is writ large throughout each episode of *Millennium*. In the 'Pilot' episode, the central character, Frank Black, explains the motive for his work

²⁰ Whilst the first season of *Millennium* will be concentrated on in this analysis, reference will also be

with serial killers by saying, ‘I’m here because I have a wife and a kid and I want them to live in a place where they can feel safe’: this piece of dialogue reflects the central narrative conceit of the series.

The coupling of a rather saccharine version of North American domesticity with the American Gothic narrative is not necessarily a new phenomenon. Indeed, in her wide ranging study of murder narratives in the United States in the late 17th to mid-19th century, Karen Halttunen has noted that in the 18th century, ‘certain categories of story-line lent themselves particularly well to Gothic narration. Tales of domestic murder evoked a powerful sense of horror over the crime’s shocking violation of the new sentimental domesticity’ (1998, 5). Halttunen goes on to suggest that, ‘[n]arratives of domestic homicide routinely invoked the sentimental view of the family as that “sacred, social institution, ordained by Heaven, to be productive of the greatest happiness to mankind,” in order to emphasise the particular abomination of murder within its precincts’ (ibid., 144). One might argue, in the context of Halttunen’s discussion of the eighteenth century murder narrative, that in the 1990s this sentimental domesticity was most frequently represented with conviction on television (most often in situation comedies and soap operas), and therefore that it is quite fitting that narratives of domestic murder should also appear on this medium, in the form of Gothic television.

In the opening post-credit sequence from the ‘Pilot’ episode of *Millennium* for example, just after a pre-credit sequence in which the viewer witnessed a serial killer fantasising about murdering a stripper, the Black family is introduced for the first time, using brightly lit, relatively soft-focus images which seek to create a sentimental image of the family. Immediately after the credits, a cut is made from a close-up of

made to episodes from later in the series, as indicated.

Frank Black shot through his car window, which re-frames to reveal the family diegetically enclosed in their unity by the car window (see fig. 4.12), to a wide, deep focus, long shot of the front of their house which tracks in with the family as they enter. Here, the visual link between the closely knit family unit and the emblematic shot of the family home seeks to establish an idyllic notion or image of ‘home’ from the outset of the narrative.



Fig. 4.12: Family unity

Regarding the photography and production design of *Millennium*, the programme’s makers are adamant that this marked duality between ‘home’ and the criminal spaces of the series had to be visually emphasised. Peter Wunstorf, director of photography on the ‘Pilot’ has stated ‘Gary Wissner²¹ and David [Nutter]²² had been already talking about a motif for the show, which was a sort of heaven and hell concept, with heaven being Frank’s home life... That idea was then reflected in the art direction and lighting’ (Probst 1996, 48), a concept which is also confirmed by Chris Carter: ‘When we go to the [Black’s] house, we want the photography to help create the feeling of a safe place. So you don’t want the camera circling or whip-panning.

²¹ Production designer on the ‘Pilot’ episode.

You want all of the moves to be as normal and as comforting as possible' (ibid., 52). This notion of visually 'marking out' the family spaces of *Millennium*, by using different film stocks, brighter lighting, and static, familiarising camerawork, is also reflected aurally within the series. Mark Snow, the musical director of the series, created an incidental score for the series whereby the potential haven which the Blacks' yellow house represents is reinforced by a change in tone of the extra-diegetic music; when the narrative returns to the house, the score frequently becomes 'lighter' or more upbeat than the suspenseful or mournful violin theme more often used in the series to denote moments of fear or sadness.

Each episode of *Millennium* is formed around a similar structure, which works around a continual move between the crime scene and Black's family home. By using this alternating structure of juxtaposition, the polarity between the two spaces of the narrative is repeatedly emphasised: in one scene a murderous mentor in a halfway house counsels his death-obsessed charge about the dangers of infiltrating families in mourning, in the next Catherine Black reads her daughter a children's story about an alligator who roams from home ('Blood Relatives'). However, as well as emphasising the distance between the family home and the spaces of criminality, the dual format of the narrative also seeks to emphasise a certain closeness or congruence between these spaces. For instance, editing techniques are often used to accentuate this closeness by moving from one space to the other using matches on image or action, thus drawing a visual comparison between the scenes. In the second episode of *Millennium*,

'Gehenna', when Black first visits a crime scene in San Francisco where a large amount of burnt human remains have been found, an extreme close-up of a human ear lying in a pile of ashes is shown (see fig. 4.13). Subsequently, when the action returns

²² Director of the 'Pilot' episode.

to the ‘Yellow House’ in the following scene, the first interior shot is again a close-up of an ear, this time that of Jordan Black (Brittany Tiplady) being licked by her dog (see fig. 4.14).



Fig. 4.13: An ear at the crime scene



Fig. 4.14: An ear in the home

Whilst this is not a direct match on image (a direct cut from the first ‘ear shot’ to the second), the visual echoes of the crime scene in San Francisco can be seen to enter into the domestic setting here. Similarly, an exact match on image is utilised to move from the Black’s home to the lair of the killer in the following episode, ‘Dead Letters’. Here, as Frank lifts the lid on his barbecue, filling the frame with white steam, the image is imperceptibly dissolved to an extreme close-up of the blank white page of the killer’s notebook in the basement of his own house. Matches on action are also employed to draw parallels between the horrific space and the domestic space; in the episode ‘522666’, at the culmination of the opening scene in which the killer, Raymond Dees (Joe Chrest), watches the bomb explode which he planted earlier, the bomber is blown back from the blast, the action then cutting immediately to Frank Black’s home as he falls back into his pillows whilst watching the television. At this moment, as with the aforementioned matches on image, the similarity of their

movements allows for a dissolution of boundaries between the family home and the site of crime, with the binary plot structure acting to compare rather than contrast between these two spaces. Furthermore, this sense of congruence between the home and the scene of the crime might also be seen to illustrate the closeness between the threatened diegetic home and the similarly threatened/unstable extra-diegetic version of the same (i.e. the domestic viewing space).

The central horror in this first season of *Millennium* is found, unsurprisingly, in the moments in which the sanctity of the Black home is penetrated by the criminal ‘other’ of the Gothic narrative, and the distance drawn between Black’s family and the outside world no longer exists. Even in the series’ title sequence, this fear of domestic invasion is invoked by a montage of images such as a blue-toned handheld track into a bedroom from a slightly skewed angle (see fig. 4.15), or a long shot in blue, taken from behind some foliage, of a woman entering a porch, the camera tracking slightly to the left to follow her movements (see fig. 4.16). During the title sequence these images and others suggestive of domestic invasion, are coupled with sinister, ambiguous shots of unidentifiable shadowy figures (see figs. 4.17), thus using this title montage to establish key images of the family home under threat.



Fig. 4.15: Domestic invasion in titles

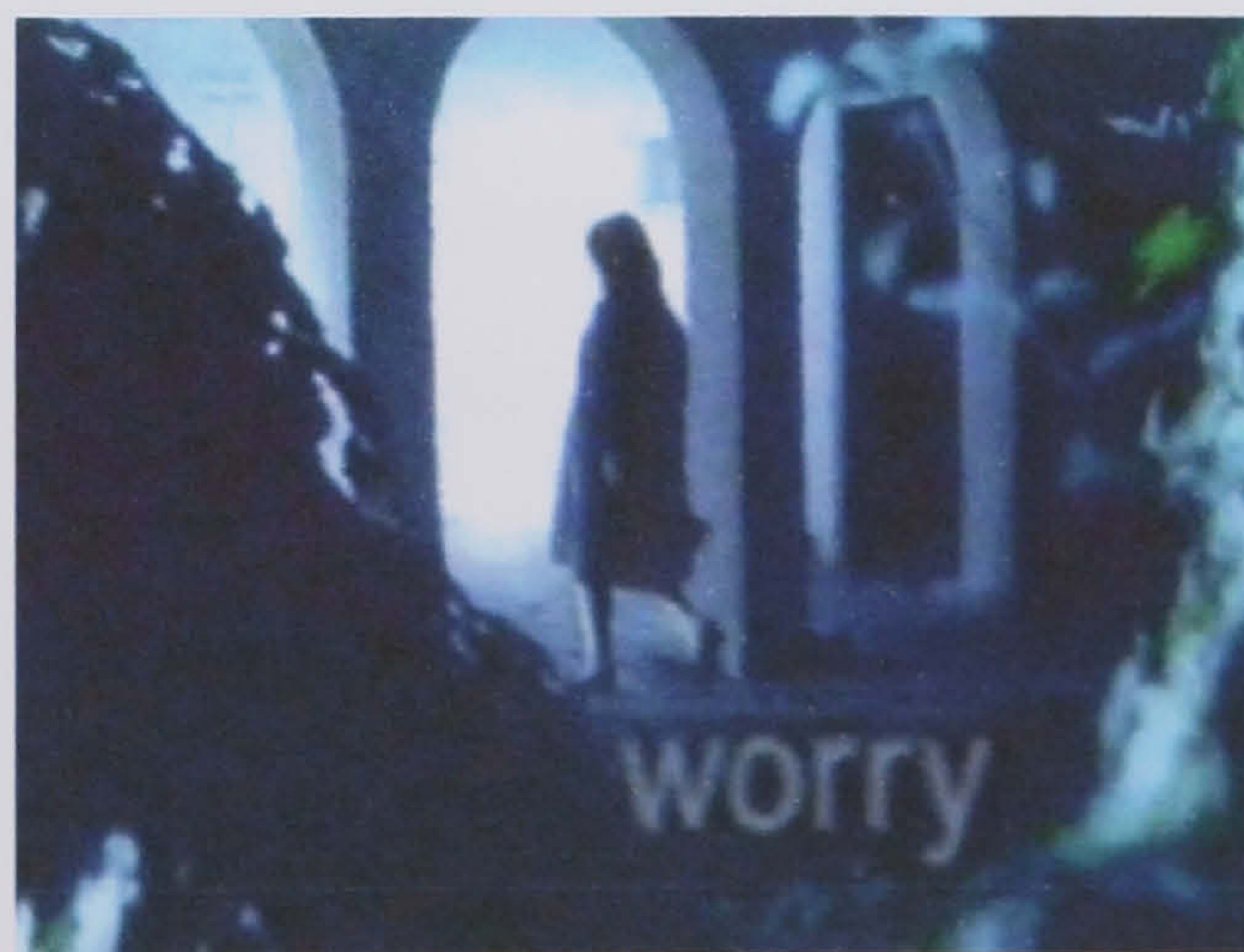


Fig. 4.16: Domestic invasion in titles



Fig. 4.17: The unidentified threat

Millennium is punctuated throughout by moments in which Frank believes his family to be in danger from those he is stalking. Even in the ‘Pilot’ episode, as he arrives back from investigating a serial murderer, Black finds his front door ajar and races round his house looking for his wife and child (until he learns that they had to leave suddenly for the hospital). This fear is brought to a climax towards the end of the first season in the episode ‘Lamentation’, which centres upon the escape from hospital of a Hannibal Lecter-style killer, Dr. Ephraim Fabricant (Alex Diakun). Fabricant’s wife, Lucy Butler (Sarah Jane Redman), and two other figures which appear simultaneously with her (a sinister looking man-woman and devil-like creature (both uncredited), who appear in Lucy Butler’s place through replacement shots/edits, suggesting that they are supernaturally one and the same person) break into the Blacks’ house, terrifying Catherine and Jordan, and killing Frank’s friend, Detective Bob Bletcher (Bill Smitrovich), by hanging him in the basement. The invasion is signalled, in the tradition of the horror narrative, by cutting off the electricity in the house, and by the discovery of Fabricant’s extracted liver (which his wife has removed from his body) in the refrigerator. There then follows a series of shots which reveal the malignant presence within the family home: close-ups of Catherine’s face looking

worried move to handheld tracking shots which follow her round the darkened house in terror, and then deep focus long shots looking down the stairs which alert us to the presence of the intruder (his/her legs are suddenly in shot), until finally, through a shot-reverse shot sequence, the invaded (Catherine Black) and the invader (the sinister man-woman) are brought up close to each other in stark relief. At this point in the Gothic television narrative, the futility of the detective's attempts to keep the evil of a society under threat from serial murder from infiltrating the safety of his family home is clear.

In *Millennium*, it is not only the detective's family who are threatened by an external evil, however; in episode after episode, the victims Frank Black investigates are attacked within the confines of their home, thus building up a kind of 'domestic victimology' whereby an image of the North American home as a safe space is no longer valid. Whether in affluent, middle-class neighbourhoods ('Wide Open', 'Weeds') or more typical suburban dwellings ('Pilot', 'Kingdom Come', 'Blood Relatives', 'The Well-Worn Lock', 'The Wild and the Innocent', 'The Thin White Line', 'Covenant', 'Lamentation', 'Powers, Principalities, Thrones and Dominions', 'Paper Dove'), the family home is depicted in most episodes of the first season of *Millennium* as a permeable space which is easily infiltrated by serial murderers and, in some cases, the supernatural forces of evil (see the description of 'Lamentation', above). In 'Paper Dove' (the final episode of season one) for example, it is the very ordinariness of the victim's home, and the ease with which the killer enters it, which highlights the horrific moment within this particular version of the televisual Gothic.

At the beginning of the episode 'Paper Dove' the viewer is introduced to both the killer (Henry Dion (Mike Starr)) and the victim (Amy Lee Walker (Angela

Donahue)) to the sounds of Wayne Kramer's 'Stranger in the House'²³, as he follows her home from the supermarket. As Amy returns home, a series of shots inside her house confirm the 'everyday-ness' of her activities: a close-up of her finger automatically keying the code on the security system key pad, followed by shots of her putting her groceries away. The act of putting the shopping away, as an ultimately quotidian moment, frames the ensuing horror as a disruption of everyday activity: indeed, unknowingly, believing that he is her husband who has just come into the house, she chats to the killer about what kind of cheese and crackers she bought at the supermarket. Cutting from these shots of banal domesticity as Amy realises that her husband is not talking back, a slow pan from her point of view takes in the sight of the deranged killer standing in her kitchen wearing nothing but a pair of rubber wading trousers. In this moment, and in the victim's horrified reaction, it is the very commonplace and unsuspecting domestic activity which is so easily and startlingly infringed upon here. This representation of the permeable family home in the United States is reinforced by the fact that later in the episode, the viewer learns that the killer, Henry Dion, works in homes all over Seattle as a 'home help', and scenes are shown in which he chats to another serial killer over the head of one of his elderly clients. In *Millennium*, the serial killer is most certainly at home within the domestic space.

Gothic television's focus on domestic space has been examined elsewhere in this thesis: in the previous analysis of the female Gothic adaptation on British television in the 1990s, for example, it was argued that certain formal techniques, such as the use of character-specific subjective camerawork and sound recording, and a repeated emphasis on the Gothic house as a location, drew a parallel between those

²³ Taken from the 1997 album *Citizen Wayne*.

domestic spaces on screen and those in which the drama was to be watched. In relation to *Millennium*, a similar correlation is also intentionally drawn by the programme makers, who expressly wished to make a connection between the image on screen and the family at home, in relation to their notion of the model viewer. As with the female Gothic adaptations, *Millennium*'s programme-makers also acknowledged the importance of point of view in creating viewer-protagonist identification within Gothic television, as a way of suturing the model viewing into the narrative. As David Nutter, director of four episodes in the first season, explains, 'one of the things that Chris Carter has instilled in me is that point of view is so very important. You always have to ask, "Who are you with in this scene?"... Rather than just sitting back observing the event, I think the camera should be part of the characters' (Probst 1996, 50).

Furthermore, Nutter, articulates the desire that the series' visual design should be aimed toward blurring the line between the homes on screen and the domestic viewing spaces:

the new film stocks can see so much and pick up so much image, and the effect I wanted to achieve was that when people were in their house at night and the lights were off and they were watching the show, that the black on the side of the screen would bleed off and make the audience feel like they're part of the show, that they're part of the story. (Vitaris 1997, 25)

Here, the potential of the dark spaces of Gothic television to 'bleed off' into the homes of the series' viewers highlights the aims of the Gothic drama made for television: to suggest a congruence between the domestic spaces on screen and the domestic spaces implicated in the reception of the series.

Millennium, and other televisual Gothic series which place the family home at the centre of their narratives, also refute Ellis Cashmore's argument that the domestic viewing context provides a 'safe space' from which to view endangered characters on screen. Cashmore proposes the following:

there is a nice tension in watching a crime show: in identifying with figures who are perpetually at risk. Perhaps it is the kind of risk we crave as a contrast to our own society... We, as viewers, are able vicariously to share the risk in the safety of our own homes and with a reasonable certainty that the morally right characters will come to no harm. (1994, 171)

In the context of *Millennium* at least, this reasonable certainty, that morally right characters in the safety of their own homes will come to no harm, is undercut by the series' relentless insistence on the randomness and 'everyday-ness' of the victims selected, many of whom are taken directly out of their family homes by a seemingly endless stream of serial killers. With a clear emphasis on shared point of view between detective, victim, and viewer, and the intentional suturing of the domestic spaces (on screen and off), the series potentially sets up an 'it could be me' response in the model viewer which defies Cashmore's cosy image of television watching. Indeed, one might be provoked here to ask how aware the broadcast text is of its audience and viewing situation, or, as Paddy Scannel inquires, 'should what is being broadcast adapt itself to, and seek to enter into, the contexts in which it is being heard [or seen]?' (1996, 78).

It is the conclusion of this analysis that a series like *Millennium* adapts the family-Gothic narrative with its viewing context in mind, and, implicitly, writes a model viewer into its narrative. Again, Scannel's analysis of broadcast media is useful here. Although he writes primarily about news coverage (specifically the coronation of the

heads of state on both radio and television), his delineation of the difference between the event and the 'event as broadcast' (ibid., 80), can also be applied to Gothic television. In this context the 'event (or drama) as broadcast' becomes a dialogue between the two domestic viewing spaces implicated in the series, e.g. the domestic as represented in each episode and the domestic viewing space. Therefore the Gothic drama of the domestic setting takes on new meaning (and arguably a greater propensity for viewer 'effect') when watched at home.

This sense of identification between narratives of domestic murder and the domestic viewer is also textually enacted within *Millennium*, most obviously by Frank Black, who expresses his fear for his own family throughout the series. In the 'Pilot', for example, Black discusses the case that prompted his nervous breakdown, before he joined the Millennium Group (consultants to the FBI on violent crime cases). He says,

I was on a serial case in Minnesota. The killer's name was Ed Couple. He would choose a neighbourhood and go up to a door. If he found it unlocked he'd consider that an invitation to go in and kill anybody home.

He would take Polaroids of his victims which he would send to the police.

Black then goes on to describe receiving photographs of his own family, and his subsequent breakdown, as if an extreme identification with the other domestic spaces in the photographs from the crime scene had prompted an unbearable fear. Through this dialogue and the Blacks' story, the programme describes, in self-referential terms, the horror of the Gothic narrative on television; identification is created by bringing the home, as the central location of fear in the Gothic narrative, into the sphere of representation, equating the photographs (and elsewhere images of domestic crime

which enter the Blacks' home via crime scene photographs, the internet and the television set), with the Gothic crime series being broadcast into viewer's homes.

Throughout the publicity campaign for *Millennium*, the series' creator, Chris Carter, insisted that this point of connection between victims' and viewers' homes, was entirely justified, seeing the representation of the family home under threat as a kind of public service. In conversation with Alan Yentob, the outgoing controller of BBC1, a channel which had, under the direction of Michael Jackson, rejected the series on the grounds of its 'unsuitable' content, Chris Carter announced the following at the Edinburgh Television Festival:

What I am concerned about is content because I think that the climate of American television right now is very anti-reality... I'm flying in the face of that. I think that what I am doing is very responsible to the world we live in. By telling these stories I am addressing the world and educating people. I hope this is a show that seeks to do more than entertain.

(Yentob and Carter 1996, 2)

Carter's statement here implicitly builds upon the 'it could be me' impulse of the Gothic television viewer; in arguing that *Millennium* reflects the realities of domestic life in the United States, the programme's creator sees the depiction of serial killers who target families in their own homes as a kind of public service, warning his viewers of the dangers of everyday life. Whilst these kinds of attacks in the 1990s were, in actuality, extremely unlikely, it is clear that the programme makers of *Millennium* wished to highlight the closeness of the diegetic world to the 'real world' in which the series was viewed.

Family Viewing

Chris Carter's defence of his series (see above), brings this analysis of Gothic serial drama in the US in the 1990s towards its conclusion, in that it raises the issue of concerns surrounding television, the Gothic narrative and the morality of consuming tales of family trauma and serial murder as entertainment. On a thematic level, what *American Gothic* and *Millennium* share, both with each other and with other contemporaneous supernatural/Gothic television dramas in the US, is a certain tangible anxiety built around the domestic spaces of the diegesis. This anxiety of domestic invasion, coupled with both series' dramatisation of what could be termed 'supernatural sight' or uncanny vision (whereby characters, or indeed the viewer, are given the ability to see beyond the realms of what is usually possible into another, frightening reality), might be read as textual enactments of ongoing concerns surrounding domestic space and, concurrently, television's position within the home.

To place these concerns about domestic viewing and morality into their proper context, one need only look to the thriving debates surrounding 'family viewing' which proliferated during the 1990s, mainly fuelled by the religious right-wing in the United States, to see why series such as *American Gothic* and *Millennium* might wish to align themselves with a public service ethic and discourses of moral propriety. Indeed, in an address entitled 'Television and the Family: Guidelines for Good Viewing' issued during the 1994 World Communications Day²⁴, Pope John Paul II both highlighted the importance of television in family life within a global context, and also called for the 'responsible' use of television by those who control and make it.

²⁴ An annual event established by the Catholic Church in 1967.

In recent decades, television has spearheaded a communications revolution which has profoundly affected family life... Television can enrich family life. It can draw family members closer together and foster their solidarity with other families and with the community at large... Television can also harm family life by propagating degrading values and models of behaviour; by broadcasting pornography and graphic depictions of violence;... and by glorifying false visions of life that obstruct the realisation of mutual respect, of justice and of peace... Television personnel... all have serious moral responsibilities to the families that make up such a large part of their audiences... Recognising the influence in which they work, they should promote sound moral and spiritual values, and avoid anything that could harm the family in its existence, its stability, its balance and its happiness, including eroticism or violence. (Pope John Paul II, 1994)

The Pope's statement effectively sums up the beliefs about television broadcasting which were held by many of the morally outraged citizens of the United States in the 1990s, and which may be seen as characteristic of an approach which led to the establishment of the 1996 Telecommunications Law in the US which outlined, amongst other proposals, plans for a ratings system for television programmes and an emphasis on concerns based around family viewing and the responsibilities of programme makers and television manufacturers. The findings of this Congressional bill prompted the production of television 'nannying' technologies such as the V-Chip (a chip placed in a television, VCR or satellite box which receives ratings codes broadcast by the networks and which blocks the reception of 'inappropriate' broadcasts), TVGuardian (a set-top 'profanity filter' which plugs into the television

set), and the Weemote (a programmable remote control which only gives access to ‘suitable’ channels)²⁵, as well as wide-spread publicity campaigns regarding responsible parenting and television access. One of the most vociferous committees behind the campaign for ‘family television’ were the ‘Parents’ Television Council’, who widely reported damning accounts of television programming in the United States during the 1990s on all the major news channels, and aired concerns about a society which Mark Seltzer has described as a ‘pathological public sphere’ (2000, 101).

In relation to Gothic television, much of the criticism levelled at programmes such as *American Gothic* and *Millennium* cited the series’ disruption of family programming as the main point of contention against the shows. In relation to this, we might once again look towards Shaun Cassidy, the central creative figure behind *American Gothic*, for an illustration of this sense of ‘disruption’. As suggested in the introduction of this chapter, much was made in the press of the contrast between Shaun Cassidy’s earlier television persona (as a teen heart throb from popular seventies family show, *The Hardy Boys Mysteries*) and the ‘dark’ content of *American Gothic*, around the time of its initial broadcast; Colson Whitehead, discussing the censorship of the ‘Pilot’ episode in *The Village Voice*, commented that ‘maybe it was the fact that the show was created by former teen heartthrob Shaun Cassidy, and the censors weren’t ready to see him da doo ron ronning into the macabre’ (1995, 35). The conflict between the Gothic show and traditional family-led programming in the United States was also personified in the casting of Gary Cole as Sheriff Buck; Cole’s most recent role before *American Gothic*, had been Mike Brady, father of the family in *The Brady Bunch Movie* (Betty Thomas, US 1995), a nostalgic film spin-off of the anodyne family-values sitcom *The Brady Bunch* (1969-1972). This incongruity.

²⁵ See, for example, <http://www.familysafemedia.com>, where a range of these devices are sold and

between ‘family television’ and the Gothic was also knowingly referred to within the series itself; as Sheriff Buck visits Caleb’s father in jail in the ‘Pilot’, he enters whistling the theme tune to another classic family show, *The Andy Williams Show* (Barnaby Productions/NBC, 1962-71), thus ironically highlighting the distance between a serial, created by a ‘Hardy Boy’ and starring a ‘Brady’, which features murder and traumatic familial pasts, and the saccharine, family-focused sitcom so perennially popular on primetime North American television.

As well as authorial incongruity, *American Gothic* was also seen as a bold commissioning decision on the part of CBS, one of the ‘big three’ networks in the States, and a company more traditionally associated with ‘lighter’ family programming. Although *American Gothic* was broadcast on Fridays at 10 p.m., and therefore after the watershed and outside ‘family viewing’ hours, it still, rather unusually for a Gothic/horror series at the time, held a high profile Friday night scheduling slot, on a major network. As Colson Whitehead notes:

Perhaps what was so beguiling about *Gothic* initially was that the gruesomeness usually banished to television’s margins – cable, syndication, Fox – had been sucked into primetime, with a real primetime budget. (1995, 35)

This notion, that Gothic television had some how infiltrated a major network/primetime, was also evidenced by the fact that CBS issued a warning before the first episode of *American Gothic*, stating that the show was possibly unsuitable for a ‘family audience’:

CBS... was so spooked about what middle America might think – and the opportunities it might provide for politicians to fulminate about V-

promoted.

chips – that the opening episode was preceded by an ‘advisory’, a warning that viewers might not like what was to follow. (Jivani 1996. 157)

This pre-show warning, that some viewers might wish to switch off or over, was unusual on a major network, and, whilst this warning could also be read as a disingenuous move to attract viewers through prohibition, perhaps it also provided the first evidence of CBS’s squeamishness about its new show. *American Gothic*’s producers have suggested that the show’s eventual ‘failure’ on its initial broadcast²⁶ can be explained by the show’s incongruity on CBS, and that CBS’s foray into the televisual Gothic was an ill-advised desire to imitate Fox’s success with their hit paranormal series, *The X-Files*. As Steven Eramo outlines,

American Gothic appeared ready to handle the throng of viewers which CBS was certain would be tuning in after *The X-Files*. The network was looking to change its image and was hoping that the offbeat series would help them make such a transition... [Shaun Cassidy] “If you look at CBS now you’ll see that they want to be a very traditional, homespun place... When we went to CBS the network was in a state of transition and for five minutes they thought they wanted to be Fox.”(1997, 13-14)

Therefore, this brief summary of *American Gothic*’s commissioning, scheduling and reception suggests that those concerns about family viewing, outlined above, had a great impact on the Gothic television series on North American television, particularly within the context of a network known before and since for the production of ‘family entertainment’.

²⁶ *American Gothic* was eventually removed from CBS’s schedule, with the latter six episodes unbroadcast until the show was later syndicated.

Like *American Gothic*, *Millennium* also received a reception in the press which very much characterised Gothic television as antithetical to family viewing, although unlike *American Gothic*, *Millennium* was broadcast on Fox, a channel with a younger, more cultist, viewership. However, when broadcast in the United Kingdom, responses such as Stephen Armstrong in *The Sunday Times* highlighted *Millennium*'s disruption of more benign scheduling:

What is going on here? This is television, the medium that Morecambe and Wise made their own in happier times. It's the medium that gave us *Terry and June*, *Top of the Pops*, and *Birds of a Feather*... Suddenly we're in the middle of *Millennium*'s serial killers... Welcome to the turn of the century. Welcome to Feel Bad TV. (1997, 14-15)

Here, Armstrong's chosen points of contrast (namely variety, 'youth' programming, and the sit-com), clearly draw up a picture of family television which excludes the Gothic, even as it shares with at least one of those genres, the situation comedy, an obsession with the family. Returning to the notion that the televisual Gothic serial is characterised by a distinctly 'cinematic' aesthetic (as outlined above), Armstrong also rather tellingly went on to suggest that it is the invasion of this very cinematic version of horror into the domestic viewing context which is so appalling: '[*Millennium*] is just like a weekly episode of the Gothic serial-monster flick, *Se7en*, brought straight into your home' (1997, 14). This response, and others like it, clearly viewed Gothic television as invasive of family viewing on an aesthetic level, as stylistically 'incorrect' for television in addition to its inappropriate content, with the image of bringing cinematic horror 'straight into your home' being repugnant, rather than a welcome result of technological innovation in television broadcasting.

It can be argued, however, that both series in this analysis are acutely aware of these concerns surrounding family viewing, and, to a certain extent, that both series pre-empt or respond to this reaction by dramatising these concerns within their ongoing narratives. One need only look towards the anxiety that surrounds the act of looking in *Millennium*, to find a textual enactment of concerns surrounding the potential of the Gothic image to corrupt. In this series, Frank Black's hallucinations are often described as both a gift and a curse, and can be read as a form of 'watching' which directly refers to the act of television viewing; the fact that Black need not be present at a murder to witness it, the fact that he experiences death/murder vicariously rather than 'first hand', and the fact that certain objects within the crime scene 'transmit' these images to him, all suggests that his visions are both supernatural and 'like television'. Throughout the series, Black's visions are regarded with a certain ambivalence; they both allow him to catch the killers which the police are nowhere near finding, and they also repeatedly drive him towards the point of paranoid madness²⁷. If we can read the visions as a kind of self-referential comment on the propriety of watching murder narratives, then this ambivalence clearly offers comment on the concerns surrounding family viewing.

Similarly, *American Gothic* also performs a kind of textual enactment of the anxiety of looking. For instance, the series frequently returns, in the moments of flashback assigned to the Sheriff's deputy, Ben Healy (Nick Searcy), to the scene in the opening episode when he accidentally oversaw Buck murdering Merlyn Temple through her bedroom window. In a shot-reverse shot sequence (see figs. 4.18-4.19), both the moment of horror, and Ben's horrified reaction, are constantly replayed, and, in the episode 'Potato Boy', Ben is driven to consult a psychiatrist about dispelling the

²⁷ This is dramatised particularly clearly in the first season episode, 'Walkabout'

image which, like those of Frank Black's 'visions' in *Millennium*, is constantly haunting him.



Fig. 4.18: Witnessing murder

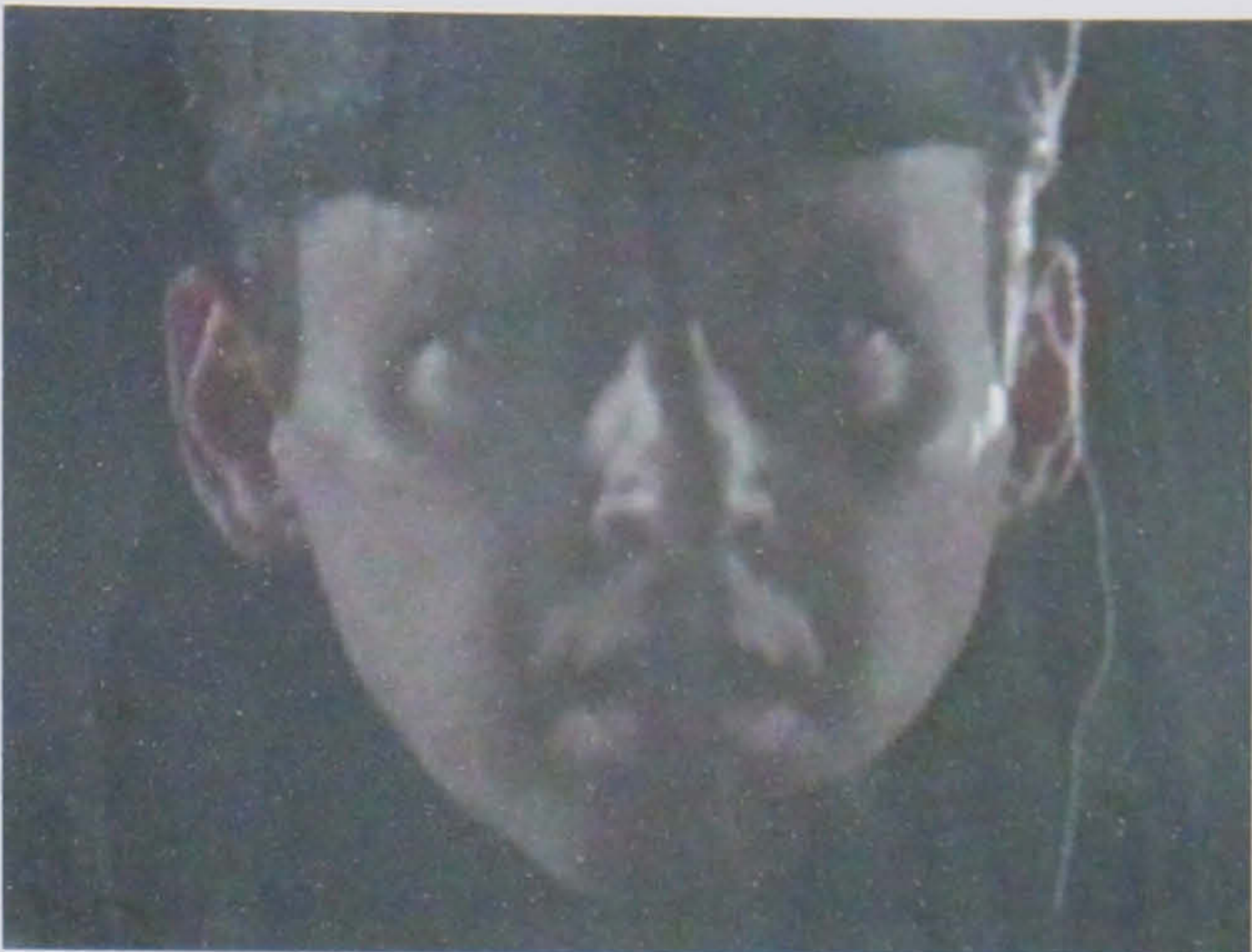


Fig. 4.19: Witnessing murder

In addition, just as Ben replays the moment of witnessing murder in *American Gothic*, so Caleb is forced to watch, and recoils from, the moment when his mother was raped by Sheriff Buck. In the CGI sequence, discussed above, where Caleb's sister, Merlyn, returns as a spirit and 'recreates' her own moment of horror (witnessing her mother's rape/brother's conception), both Merlyn as a young girl and Caleb watching from the edge of the 'vision', are shown in extreme close-up in a traumatised state, witnessing this act of profound violence. When Caleb simply asks his sister 'why?', she replies 'because you have to know the truth', thus suggesting that although it is alarming to view the central moment of their familial trauma, it is also necessary to confront the realities of their family life. In an echo of this sentiment from the 'Pilot' episode of *American Gothic*, Shaun Cassidy suggested, in a CBS sponsored press conference at Universal Studios following a showing of the pilot episode for television critics, that he too was showing 'life as it really is'. Similarly to Chris Carter's suggestion that

Millennium had a public service remit in representing the horrors of the United States in the nineties, Cassidy stated the following:

right, there are seventy children a week, according to the National Council of Domestic Violence, that are killed in their homes by parents or guardians... This is a real issue, and we're not a political show, certainly. This is a show that is rooted in a mythological good and evil. But when you're talking about an issue like that, I would hope that it is shocking. And I would hope that it causes discomfort. And I would hope within the context of our show, we can address those issues and actually use it as a forum, because the world is scary right now. There's a lot of this going on. A real Gothic episode is being played out in South Carolina right now as we speak. To deny that, I think, is foolish and irresponsible. [Cassidy is referring to the Susan Smith case in Union, South Carolina in which a woman was sentenced to life in prison for murdering her two sons]. (quoted in Gothic Phantom, undated)

Here, as with Carter and *Millennium*, Cassidy expresses the anxiety surrounding family viewing and the appropriateness of the Gothic narrative for television, just as he dramatised these anxieties within the series' narrative.

So the question of how to deal with these problems of morality and broadcasting standards remains an issue. Just as television personnel struggled with these problems in the UK in the 1950s, so Gothic television in the United States in the 1990s continued to seek to find a way around representing horror within a domestic context. Perhaps this issue is reflected in both *Millennium* and *American Gothic*'s ironic, self-referential antagonism towards its own medium, both in the depiction of television as negative force within North American culture, and in the representation

of television as a point of access through which the horrifying/terrifying may enter the domestic space²⁸. In *Millennium*, for example, television is to blame for kidnap (in 'The Wild and the Innocent' a young girl's baby is sold by her stepfather in order to pay for an enormous widescreen TV), is constantly disparaged by Frank Black (for example, in '522666' he quips 'I already have a job' in response to the request for a TV interview), and is repeatedly shown within the diegesis as sensationalising or trivialising violence. As Black lies in bed with his wife in the episode 'Dead Letters', a cut is made from the police station to a TV image from a 'real crime' show, writ large within the narrative, the edge of the screen barely visible within the frame. Following this cut, the channel is switched to an entertainment/chat show; here, the diegetic channel hopping emphasises the use of crime as entertainment, whilst simultaneously depicting the television set as a point of entry for the criminal narrative into the home. At this point, and others like it, *Millennium* is both highly self-referential and knowing, and simultaneously morally outraged by its own medium (and perhaps even its own genre).

American Gothic's attitude towards television is also clearly visualised and dramatised within the series; in the opening sequence of episode four, 'Damned If You Don't', a mobile camera in a junkyard tracks repeatedly, and very obviously, around a broken television set, a moment which is possibly symbolic of a certain ironic disparagement towards the medium (placing the TV set in the junkyard, 'where it belongs'). Later in the series, television is depicted as the motive behind crime: a radio DJ betrays his wife and co-presenter in order to get on television ('Resurrector'), and

²⁸ This is also not a new phenomenon on North American television. Jeffrey Sconce gives a thorough account of the ways in which early US television was viewed as a supernaturally invasive medium and describes how programmes such as *The Twilight Zone* (CBS Television/Cayuga Productions, 1959-64) and *The Outer Limits* (Daystar Productions/United Artists Television/Villa di Stefano, 1963-65) 'continued to feed the fantastical and increasingly paranoid public imagination of electronic media' (2000, back cover), in his book *Haunted Media: Electronic Presence from Telegraphy to Television*.

Ben's brother, Artie (Jeff Perry) attacks a store clerk over a watch which can change television channels in the episode 'The Beast Within'. At the end of this episode, the self-referentiality of television's role within the Gothic narrative is enacted in the fact that Sheriff Buck turns to face directly into the camera with the channel-changing watch and, as he presses the button (signified by a beep), the shot immediately changes to the image of a purple sunset, as if he had just changed channels on the viewers' television set. Here, as in the beginning of *Riget*, television's supernatural qualities are intimated.

Ultimately, *American Gothic* dealt with the problem of its suitability within a 'family medium' through its rather pompous, sitcom-style morality, whereby each episode was clearly assigned 'good' characters who 'win through' by behaving within the guidelines of family values; Colson Whitehead, describing 'Damned If You Don't', an episode in which Caleb learns a lesson about helping himself and hard work whilst doing a science project for school, argues that ultimately *American Gothic* offers 'a brimstone variation on an old sitcom storyline' (1995, 35). It is through this treatment of the 'episode as parable' format, and through the series' depiction of the other, 'good' side of the American Gothic narrative (the presence of angels, for example), an aspect of Gothic culture in the 1990s described by Mark Edmundson as 'the culture of facile transcendence... inspired by the belief that self-transformation is as simple as a fairy-tale wish' (1997, xv), that the series attempted to escape from the relentless bleakness of the American Gothic.

Millennium, on the other hand, ultimately reverts to formal answers to the problem of broadcasting standards and family viewing, in that the series' central visual conceit, the supernatural points of view, allowed for a representation of extreme violence and serial murder which, like the ghost stories on British Gothic television in

the 1960s and 70s, showed less and suggested more. These montage sequences, described above as the visual signature of *Millennium*, rather judiciously represented violence/gruesomeness on screen in an expressive, rather than graphic, way, thus avoiding the censorship of television's regulatory bodies and fears for the family viewer. For example, looking back to the first of Frank Black's 'visions', in the 'Pilot' episode of *Millennium*, the series of shots, jumpily edited 'in camera' and accompanied by screams, the sound of breaking glass and heavy breathing, only show a limited number of images (the young woman struggling against the camera and the blood spattered carpet and the top of the stripper's face), and do so in a matter of seconds, thus avoiding the graphic depiction of the murder which is subsequently described as a decapitation. Several formal techniques render this montage (and others) as suggestively indistinct (fast editing, blurry, handheld camerawork, non-synchronous sound, etc.), and therefore, whilst the overall effect of the montage sequences is horrific, the viewer is not actually privy to the act of horror. The viewer is in fact twice removed from the moment of horror, as it is neither depicted 'first hand' within the narrative, nor is it depicted 'second hand' in an easily readable or viewable way. Chris Carter explicitly cited this use of the expressive montage as a 'way round' broadcasting standards:

Carter did not experience many complaints from Fox's Standards and Practices. Disputes were rare. "We don't show all that much on the show," Carter said. "We show things in flashes. They're impressionistic; they're not graphic, and its what we don't show that is the more interesting part of the show." (Vitaris 1997, 26)

To conclude this examination of the televisual Gothic then, it is clear that in moments such as the first 'vision' (discussed above), the identifying formal techniques of the

televisual Gothic concurrently mark out *Millennium*'s visual stylishness, allow for a representation of the American Gothic which is very much grounded within the quotidian spaces of the family home, and ultimately appease those concerns surrounding family viewing and the morality of viewing the Gothic narrative as entertainment, by reverting to techniques of suggestion rather than expression which characterised Gothic television over thirty years before the programme's production. All of this would suggest that in actual fact, the concerns and obsessions of recent Gothic narratives from the US are strikingly similar to that of Gothic television in Britain in the 1960s.

Conclusion

Gothic television can be characterised by the meeting of two houses. This analysis of Gothic drama on television has looked at the ways in which the textual domestic spaces of the Gothic (haunted houses, decaying mansions, permeable family homes under threat from both outside and inside) correspond with the extra-textual or contextual domestic spaces of television (the homes in which the medium is viewed), and has examined the dialogue between these two houses. In the previous chapter of this thesis, for example, I argued that paranoid anxieties surrounding representations of domestic space in recent North American Gothic television (endemic of both a national variation of the Gothic genre, as well as the specific concerns of Gothic television), relate quite clearly to the domestic reception contexts of the programmes' reception, reflecting on anxieties around television's status as a potentially invasive medium. Throughout this thesis it has been proposed that it is possible to look to the very fabric of the programmes in question to create a picture of the assumed domestic viewer, also referred to in my analysis as the 'model viewer', who is written, or rather recorded, into the texts of Gothic television. Furthermore, I have also looked at the potential problems, as well as the possibilities, of bringing the Gothic narrative into the home, and have discussed the medium-specific ways in which representation of the supernatural and the uncanny is negotiated on television.

However, the word 'house' may also be used alternatively to refer to a group of concepts or body of people, and it is also true that under these terms this thesis has been marked by a meeting of two metaphorical houses, in that a dialogue has been created here between Gothic studies and television studies. Whilst it might be (correctly) presumed that these are radically divergent fields of academic study, there

are also striking points of convergence between the two disciplines which, it is hoped, have been made apparent through this analysis of Gothic television. In fact, it can be argued that these two disciplines are most clearly joined together by the concept of the uncanny.

Whilst the uncanny's relationship to the Gothic genre is well documented, to the point at which the two terms become almost synonymous, television studies' use of the uncanny as a pivotal concept within the understanding of television as a medium is less visible. However, if we look at the meta-analyses of television which have characterised its academic study, we see that the specific nature of broadcast television is located precisely within the terms of the uncanny, in that many critical analyses of television rest upon viewing the medium as the meeting point of the familiar/everyday with the unfamiliar/extraordinary (a meeting which, as has been argued throughout this thesis, also defines the uncanny). To take a recent example of such an analysis of television to illustrate this point, we can look to John Ellis's notion of 'witness' (2000) to understand how television studies utilises the terms (if not the term) of the uncanny.

In his book *Seeing Things: Television in the Age of Uncertainty*, Ellis argues the following:

The twentieth century has been the century of witness. As we emerge from that century, we can realise that a profound shift has taken place in the way that we perceive the world that exists beyond our immediate experience... [television] has brought us face to face with the great events, banal happenings, the horrors and the incidental cruelties of our times. Perhaps we have seen too much. Certainly, "I did not know" and "I did not realise" are no longer open to us as a defence. (ibid., 9)

Later in the same analysis, Ellis qualifies television's ability to 'witness' by defining three eras of television (the eras of scarcity, availability, and plenty), delineating the purest form of witness in the era of scarcity, when the limited choice of broadcast television guaranteed a large but dispersed domestic audience:

television allowed its viewers to witness remote events as they happened.

Television provided its audiences with a powerful sense of co-presence with the events it showed. It provided them with a sense of togetherness in separation from their fellow audience members. It reached its audiences in their homes. Television made the act of witness into an intimate and domestic act. (ibid., 32)

Whilst Ellis argues that the act of witness is less united in the era of plenty (i.e. in the age of digital, multi-channel television at the beginning of the twenty-first century), he concludes that it still remains an important aspect of broadcast television, arguing that '[television] will be distinguished by its continuing, crucial, social role of working through the emotions provoked by the process of witness' (ibid., 178).

What the above description of John Ellis's work provides us with is an image of television studies' deployment of the terms of the uncanny. Ellis makes a strong case for the fact that television is characterised by its delivery of extraordinary events into the homes of its viewers, arguing that 'the great events, banal happenings, the horrors and the incidental cruelties of our times' 'reach into' the domestic spaces in which a television set is located. It therefore seems to me that in describing broadcast television, Ellis describes the uncanny, whereby the unfamiliar (death, horror) is brought into the boundaries of the familiar (the home), almost to the point at which the unfamiliar becomes simultaneously familiar to the domestic viewer (we become used to seeing war, famine, and other atrocities on television). To this definition of

television studies' inherent use of the terms of uncanniness, we might also add that the medium's repetitive structures and built-in systems of recognition, also isolated within the discipline as one of television's defining characteristics, can be identified as uncanny (as was argued in chapter three of this thesis). If, as Freud proposes in his treatise on the uncanny, 'involuntary repetition... surrounds what would otherwise be innocent enough with an uncanny atmosphere' (1990, 359), then the repetitive patterns of television production and scheduling (as described, in Raymond Williams's seminal study of the medium (1975), to give a prominent example), might also be seen as uncanny. What I do not want to argue, at this late stage in the thesis, is that television as a whole is inherently uncanny; this is a complicated issue, and one which other scholars have explored (cf. Ledwon, 1993; Sconce, 2000). Rather, I am proposing that television studies has implicitly taken up the terms of the uncanny to describe the nature of broadcast television, and therefore the uncanny might be seen as the concept which links the dual critical strands of this thesis, which provides the initial point of dialogue between Gothic studies and television studies, and by looking at Gothic television, this point of connection has been made clear. Furthermore, the anxieties surrounding the broadcast of Gothic television identified in the second and fifth chapters of this thesis (fears about bringing death/horror into the domestic viewing space), might be seen as indicative of broader concerns around the propriety of television broadcast as a whole.

This discussion of the uncanny as the central, underlying concept of this thesis might also suggest some of the ways in which this work contributes to the field of Gothic studies. It is hoped that the analyses given here have deepened the understanding of the uncanny as the cathexis of Gothic fiction, building on work already undertaken on the appearance of the uncanny in the fields of literary (cf.

Todorov, 1975; Jackson, 1981), photographic (cf. Gunning, 1995), film (cf. Prawer, 1980; Coates, 1991; Castle, 1995), and television theory (cf. Ledwon, 1993; Probyn, 1993). In addition to the fact that this thesis has revealed an area of Gothic fiction which had previously been afforded scant critical attention in the field of Gothic studies, it might also be seen as innovatory in that it furthers discussions of medium specificity and the adaptation of Gothic literature which are already well under way in film studies, examining the development of the particular relationship of Gothic literature to Gothic television.

Ultimately, by looking at the programmes identified as Gothic in a variety of national and historical contexts, it becomes clear that the genre provides moments of difference within the flow of broadcast television, in that the programmes examined have been characterised, to a greater or lesser extent, by a sense of artistry or experimentation, or, at the very least, by an unusual textual richness; indeed, this may be the reason for my attraction to Gothic television as an object of study in the first place. It is perhaps paradoxical, given that I have been studying one of the most formulaic of genres, to conclude that Gothic television is actually less standardised and formulaic than other forms of television drama, but perhaps this sense of richness and diversity comes from the fact that this study has worked toward the critical construction of the genre, rather than looking at a genre already identified within production and viewing practices. Conceivably, if Gothic television was to become more widely recognised as a category of television drama, the genre would quickly become standardised; indeed, the recent bevy of supernatural serials on US television discussed in the last chapter of this thesis (e.g. *American Gothic*, *Millennium*, *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, *Profiler*, *Brimstone*, *The Others*), feeding the niche/cult markets produced by cable/satellite broadcasting, have a certain self-regenerative

quality which guarantees that innovation and formal experimentation soon becomes repetitive and mundane.

When evaluating what might have been left out of this analysis of Gothic television, it strikes me that there are certain texts which have been omitted from this study which may have complicated or over-stretched my definition of Gothic television, but which, with hindsight, are nevertheless worth discussing. Whilst the programmes I have examined have tended to be 'straight' drama (perhaps an oxymoron in the realm of Gothic fiction), there has also been a tradition of more parodic forms of the Gothic on television, which might be seen to trouble my categorisation of Gothic television. As Fred Botting notes of the closeness of the Gothic to its parodic forms,

it is in the spilling over of boundaries, in its uncertain effects on audiences, that Gothic horrors are most disturbing. That these effects are ambivalent, from the eighteenth century onwards, has been signalled by the capacity of Gothic formulae to produce laughter as abundantly as emotions of terror or horror. Stock formulas and themes, when too familiar, are eminently susceptible to parody and self-parody. (1996, 168)

Whilst my analysis has concentrated on Gothic television's ability to produce sensations of anxiety and uncanniness in its viewers, it has not really dealt with the fact that the genre might also inspire hysterical laughter. In the above statement Botting outlines the fact that over-familiarity with generic conventions might produce laughter in itself (we could see this, for example, in the ironic, cultist spectatorship of re-runs of the Gothic daytime soap opera in the US, *Dark Shadows* (Dan Curtis Productions Inc., 1966-71), but he argues that there also co-exists distinct forms of

Gothic parody. On television, this has been seen most clearly in *The Addams Family* and *The Munsters*, the Gothic sit-coms of the 1960s which Botting describes as ‘comic inversion[s] of everyday American family life’ (ibid.), and which we might also see as comic inversions of everyday American television, in that they inherently poke fun at the conventions of domestic situation comedy, as much as the conventional mise-en-scène and characterisations of Gothic fiction¹. In these instances, the laughter of the Gothic parody is turned squarely towards the representation of ideal homes and families as featured in earlier sitcoms such as *Leave It To Beaver* (ABC/CBS/Gomalco Productions/Kayro Productions/Revue Studios, 1957-63), thus suggesting that the comic Gothic is as capable of disarming or exposing domestic ideology as more serious forms of the genre. The attitude towards domestic perfection in these series is, however, ambivalent; as with other fantasy sitcoms from the 1960s, such as *Bewitched* (Ashmont Productions, 1964-72) and *I Dream of Jeannie* (Columbia Pictures Television/Sidney Shelman Productions, 1965-70), which transpose figures from the Gothic genre (witches, spirits, etc.) into the domestic sitcom, *The Addams Family* and *The Munsters* also ironically present rather conservative images of the family as a hallowed or sacred institution, with very traditional parental gender roles established from the outset.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer and its spin-off series, *Angel*, perhaps the most famous and successful examples of parodic, hybrid Gothic television in recent years, have also been left out of this thesis, partly because a wealth of critical literature is already being produced on these series, with several articles discussing *Buffy*’s relationship to the Gothic genre (cf. Callander, 2000; Davis, 2000): as Robert A. Davis argues,

¹ N.B. They particularly reference the Gothic horror films made by Universal Studios in the 1930s.

in one sense, the literary and cinematic ancestry of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* seems self-consciously clear. Episode by episode the program makers mischievously invoke the full catalogue of gothic horrors, knowingly parading an endless series of monstrous exhibits whose thoroughbred credentials from the archives of gothic fiction and film make them instantly recognisable to the viewing audience. (2000, para. 1)

Whereas both Davis and Callander argue that *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is indeed Gothic, citing a wealth of visual and narrative references to the genre within the series, it was the ‘lightness’ and humour of this series (it is a teen comedy series as much as a Gothic horror show), as well as its already-established canonicity, which led me to omit it from my analysis. However, like *The Addams Family* and *The Munsters*, *Buffy* also clearly relates to some of the central issues dealt with in this thesis, particularly those questions about gender and the Gothic genre raised in chapter four of this thesis (indeed, in a second season episode entitle ‘Halloween’, Buffy puts on a haunted costume (an eighteenth century ball gown) which transforms her into a vulnerable Gothic heroine). As a post-feminist text (Moseley, 2000b), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* works through many of the anxieties of femininity and independence which are generic to the Gothic heroine, and, like recent Gothic series such as *Millennium* and *American Gothic*, also explores the fear of home invasion; indeed, we can see the threatened domestic space as one of the focal centres of a series in which the young heroine struggles to look after her home and younger sister whilst defending it from a wealth of supernatural enemies.

In conclusion, perhaps the project of defining the Gothic as a television genre has, paradoxically, limited the usefulness of the term ‘Gothic television’. By paring

the definition down to identify a certain category of television drama, perhaps I have also closed down the usage of the term in a restrictive way. Alternatively, by discussing Gothic-ness on television, and locating the appearance of the Gothic as both an aesthetic and as a set of stock characters/events, a more inclusive, though less precise, definition of Gothic television can be produced which embraces both straight and parodic forms of the genre, and instances of the Gothic in both fictional and factual television. Discussing this problem in relation to the study of Gothic literature, Anne Williams proposes to see the Gothic as a 'complex', selecting this descriptor for its multiple meanings, as an adjective ('consisting of interconnected or interwoven parts... involved, intricate or complicated' (1995, 23)), a noun ('a whole composed of interconnected parts' (ibid.)), and as a psychiatric term ('a connected group of repressed ideas that compel characteristic or habitual patterns of thought, feeling, or action' (ibid.)). By categorising the Gothic as a complex rather than a genre, we might begin to see a much broader picture of Gothic television, opening up the space for a discussion of occurrences and instances of the Gothic across a wider range of texts and genres.

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Teleography¹

Addams Family, The, US, Filmways Productions, tx. 18.9.1964. - 8.4.1966.

Prod: David Levy

Main cast: John Astin (Gomez Addams), Carolyn Jones (Morticia Addams), Ted Cassidy (Lurch/Thing), Felix Silla (Cousin It).

Ally McBeal, US, 20th Century Fox Television/David E. Kelley Productions, tx. 8.9.1997. – 20.5.2002.

Prod: David E. Kelley

Main cast: Calista Flockhart (Ally McBeal), Greg Germann (Richard Fish), Jane Krakowski (Elaine Vassal), Portia de Rossi (Nelle Porter).

Amazing Stories, US, Amblin Entertainment/Universal TV, tx. 29.9.1985. – 10.4.1987.

Prod: Steven Spielberg/David E. Vogel.

American Chronicles, US, Lynch/Frost, tx. 8.9.1990. – 15.12.1990.

Prod: David Lynch/Mark Frost.

American Gothic, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 22.9.1995. – 11.7.1996.

Prod. Sam Raimi/Robert Tapert, Creator: Shaun Cassidy

Main cast: Gary Cole (Sheriff Lucas Buck), Lucas Black (Caleb Temple), Sarah Paulson (Merlyn Temple), Paige Turco (Gail Emory).

Andy Williams Show, The, US, Barnaby Productions/NBC, tx. 27.9.1962. – 27.3.1971.

Prod: Norman Lear/Bud Yorkin.

Angel, US, 20th Century Fox Television/Mutant Enemy Inc./Kuzui

Enterprises/Sandollar Television, tx. 5.10.1999. – current.

Prod: Joss Whedon/Fran Rubel Kuzui/Kaz Kuzui/Gail Berman/Sandy Gallin, Creator: Joss Whedon

Main cast: David Boreanaz (Angel), Charisma Carpenter (Cordelia Chase), Glenn Quinn (Allen Francis Doyle), Alexis Denisof (Wesley Wyndam-Pryce).

Armchair Mystery Theatre, UK, ABC, tx. 5.6.1960. – 26.9.1965.

Prod: Leonard White.

Armchair Theatre, UK, ABC/Thames, tx. 8.7.1956. – 9.7.1974.

Prod: Sydney Newman et al.

'Ash Tree, The', episode five, *Ghost Story for Christmas*, UK, BBC1, tx. 23.12.1975.

Writer: M.R. James/David Rudkin, Dir: Lawrence Gordon Clark

Main cast: Edward Petherbridge (Sir Richard Fell), Barbara Ewing (Anne Mothersole), Lucy Griffiths (Mrs. Chiddock), Lalla Ward (Lady Augusta).

¹ N.B. In some cases, writer, director, or main cast are not given when these details change from week to week. In most cases, the executive or head producers are cited. For some long running serials and soap operas, the creator is given rather than the producer (as this personnel is changed frequently throughout the life of the programme). All transmission dates given here relate to the initial transmission of the programme in its country of origin.

Ballykissangel, UK, BBC1, tx. 1.2.1996. – 15.4.2001.

Prod: Sophie Balhetchet/David Shanks, Creator: Kieran Prendiville

Main cast: Dervla Kirwan (Assumpta Fitzgerald), Stephen Tompkinson (Father Peter Clifford), Tina Kellegher (Niamh Quigley), Peter Hanly (Ambrose Egan).

‘Beast Within, The’, episode thirteen, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 3.7.1996.

Writer: Shaun Cassidy, Dir: Michael Lange

Main cast: Jeff Perry (Artie), Lynda Clark (Rita), Rick Forrester (Salesman).

Belphégor: le fantôme du Louvre, France, ORTF/SN Pathé Cinéma, tx. 6.3.1965. – 27.3.1965.

Prod: Claude Barma, Writer: Arthur Bernède/Claude Barma/Jacques Armand, Dir: Claude Barma

Main cast: Juliette Gréco (Laurence/Stéphanie Hiquet), René Dary (Commissaire Méndardier), François Chaumette (Boris Williams), Isaac Alvarez (Belphégor).

Bewitched, US, Ashmont Productions, tx. 17.9.1964. – 25.3.1972.

Prod: Harry Ackerman, et al

Main cast: Elizabeth Montgomery (Samantha Stephens), Dick York (Darrin Stephens), Agnes Moorehead (Endora), Erin Murphy (Tabitha Stephens).

‘Blood Relatives’, episode seven, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 6.12.1996.

Writer: Chip Johannessen, Dir: James Charleston

Main cast: John Fleck (Connor), Sean Six (James Dickerson), Lynda Boyd (Mrs. Dechant).

Brady Bunch, The, US, ABC/Paramount/Redwood Productions, tx. 26.9.1969. – 30.8.1974.

Prod: Sherwood Schwartz

Main cast: Robert Reed (Mike Brady), Florence Henderson (Carol Brady), Maureen McCormick (Marcia Brady), Susan Olsen (Cindy Brady).

Brideshead Revisited, UK, Granada, tx. 12.10.1981. – 22.12.1981.

Prod: Derek Granger, Writer: Evelyn Waugh/John Mortimer, Dir: Charles Sturridge/Michael Lindsay-Hogg

Main cast: Jeremy Irons (Charles Ryder), Anthony Andrews (Sebastian Flyte), Phoebe Nicholls (Cordelia Flyte), Diana Quick (Julia Flyte).

Brimstone, US, Warner Bros. Television, tx. 23.10.1998. – 12.2.1999.

Prod: Peter Horton, Writer: Angel Dean Lopez/Scott Williams

Main cast: Peter Horton (Ezekiel Stone), John Glover (The Devil).

Buffy, the Vampire Slayer, US, 20th Century Fox Television/Mutant Enemy Inc./Kuzui Enterprises/Sandollar Television, tx. 10.3.1997. – current.

Prod: Joss Whedon/Fran Rubel Kuzui/Kaz Kuzui/Gail Berman/Sandy Gallin. Creator: Joss Whedon

Main cast: Sarah Michelle Gellar (Buffy Summers), Nicholas Brandon (Xander Harris), Alyson Hannigan (Willow Rosenberg), Anthony Stewart Head (Rupert Giles).

‘Canterville Ghost, The’, episode seven, *Mystery and Imagination*, first series, UK, ABC, tx. 12.3.1966.

Writer: Oscar Wilde/Giles Cooper, Dir: Kim Mills

Main cast: Bruce Forsyth (Ghost), Doris Rogers (Mrs. Umney), John Falconer (Porson), David Stoll, (Lord Canterville).

‘Casting the Runes’, episode one, *Mystery and Imagination*, third series, UK, ABC, tx. 22.3.1968.

Writer: M.R. James/Evelyn Frazer, Dir: Alan Cooke

Main cast: John Fraser (Dunning), Robert Eddison (Karswell), Gordon Jackson (Gayton).

Casualty, UK, BBC1, tx. 6.9.1986. – current.

Prod: Laura Mackie/Mal Young

Main cast: Derek Thompson (Charlie Fairhead), Catherine Shipton (Duffy).

Chicago Hope, US, 20th Century Fox Television/David E. Kelley Productions, tx. 18.9.1994. – 4.5.2000.

Prod: various, Creator: David E. Kelley

Main cast: Adam Arkin (Dr. Aaron Shut), Christone Lahti (Dr. Kate Austin), Hector Elizondo (Dr. Phillip Watters).

Chiller, UK, Yorkshire, tx. 9.3.1995. – 27.4.1995.

Prod: Lawrence Gordon Clark/Peter Lover.

Christopher Lee’s Ghost Story for Christmas, UK, BBC1, tx. 23.12.2000. - 31.12.2000.

Prod: Richard Downes, Writer: M.R. James/Ronald Frame, Dir: Eleanor Yule

Main cast: Christopher Lee (M.R. James).

Coronation Street, UK, Granada, tx. 9.12.1960. – current.

Prod: various, Creator: Tony Warren.

Count Dracula, UK, BBC2, tx. 22.2.1977.

Prod: Morris Barry, Writer: Bram Stoker/Gerald Savory, Dir: Philip Saville

Main Cast: Louis Jourdan (Count Dracula), Frank Finlay (Prof Van Helsing), Susan Penhaligon (Lucy Westernra), Bosco Hogan (Jonathan Harker).

‘Covenant’, episode sixteen, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 21.3.1997.

Writer: Robert Moresco, Dir: Roderick J. Pridy

Main cast: John Finn (William Garry), Michael O’Neill (County Prosecutor Calvin Smith), Sarah Koskoff (Didi Higgins), Steve Bacic (Deputy Kevin Reilly).

Crossroads, UK, ATV, tx. 2.11.1964. - 3.4.1988.

Prod: Jack Barton/Eric Fawcett/Pieter Rogers/William Smethurst/Reg Watson.

‘Damned If You Don’t’, episode four, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 10.10.1995.

Writer: Michael R. Perry/Stephen Gaghan, Dir: Lou Antonio

Main cast: Steve Rankin (Carter Bowen), Muse Watson (Wash Sutpen).

Dark Shadows, US, Dan Curtis Productions Inc., tx. 27.6.1966. – 2.4.1971.

Prod: Robert Costello/Peter Miner/Lela Swift/Sy Tomashoff, Creator: Art Wallace

Main cast: Joan Bennett (Elizabeth Collins Stoddard), Alexandra Isles (Victoria Winton Clark), Jonathan Frid (Barnabas Collins), Grayson Hall (Dr. Julia Hoffman).

‘Dead Letters’, episode three, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 8.11.1996.

Writer: Glen Morgan/James Wong, Dir: Thomas J. Wright

Main cast: Chris Ellis (Jim Penseyres), Ron Halder (The Killer), James Morrison (Jim Horn).

Dead of Night, UK, BBC2, tx. 5.11.1972. – 17.12.1972.

Prod: Innes Lloyd.

‘Dead to the World’, episode five, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 13.10.1995.

Writer: Robin Green/Mitchell Burgess/Shawn Cassidy/Michael R. Perry/Stephen Gaghan, Dir: James A. Conter

Main cast: Linda Pierce (Mrs. Gallagher), Melissa McBride (Holly Gallagher), John Shearin (Waylon Flood).

‘Dreams of Leaving’, episode thirteen, *Play For Today*, fourteenth series, UK, BBC1, tx. 15.1.1980.

Prod: David Rose, Writer: David Hare, Dir: David Hare

Main cast: Bill Nighy (William), Kate Nelligan (Caroline), Andrew Seear (Andrew), Mel Smith (Xan).

‘Dr. Death Takes a Holiday’, episode twelve, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 31.1.1996.

Writer: Victor Bumbalo, Dir: Doug Leffler

Main cast: Veronica Cartwright (Angela), Will Leskin (Judge Streeter), Tamara Burnham (Charlotte Streeter).

Dr. Terrible’s House of Horrible, UK, BBC2, tx. 12.11.2001. – 17.12.2001.

Prod: Graham Duff/Steve Coogan/Henry Normal, Writer: Graham Duff/Steve Coogan/Henry Normal, Dir: Matt Lipsey

Main cast: Steve Coogan (Dr. Terrible/various).

Doctor Who, UK, BBC1, tx. 23.11.1963. – 22.11.1989.

Prod: various, Creator: Sydney Newman.

‘Dracula’, episode three, *Mystery and Imagination*, fourth series, UK, Thames, tx. 18.11.1968.

Writer: Bram Stoker/Charles Graham, Dir: Patrick Dromgoole

Main cast: Denholm Elliott (Dracula), Corin Redgrave (Harker), Susan George (Lucy Weston), Susanne Neve (Mina Harker), Bernard Archard (Van Helsing).

Eastenders, UK, BBC1, tx. 19.2.1985. – current.
Prod: various, Creator: Tony Holland/Julia Smith.

‘Echo of Your Last Goodbye’, *American Gothic*, CBS/Renaissance, N.B. This episode was unaired in the US on the first run of the series.
Writer: John Cork, Dir: Oz Scott
Main cast: Tanya Rollins (Tina), Tammy Arnold (Judith Temple).

Edgar Allen Poe Centenary, The, UK, BBC, tx. 6.10.1949.
Prod: Douglas Allen, Writer: Edgar Allen Poe/Joan Maude/Michael Warren, Dir: uncredited.

e.r. US, Amblin/Constant C/Warner Bros. Television, tx. 19.9.1994. – current.
Prod: various, Creator: Michael Crichton
Main cast: Anthony Edwards (Dr. Mark Greene), Laura Innes (Dr. Kerry Weaver), George Clooney (Dr. Douglas Ross), Juliana Margulies (Nurse Carol Hathaway).

‘Eye of the Beholder’, episode three, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 6.10.1995.
Writer: Shaun Cassidy/Judy Ann Mason, Dir: Jim Charleston
Main cast: Michael Burgess (Daniel Trulane), N’Bushe Wright (Cheryl Trulane).

‘Fall of the House of Usher’, episode three, *Mystery and Imagination*, first series, UK, ABC, tx. 12.2.1966.
Writer: Edgar Allen Poe/David Campton, Dir: Kim Mills
Main cast: David Buck (Richard Beckett), Denholm Elliott (Roderick Usher), Susannah York (Madeline Usher), Mary Miller (Lucy).

Fantasy Island, US, Columbia Pictures/Spelling-Goldberg Productions, tx. 14.1.1977. – 19.5.1984.
Prod: Leonard Goldberg/Aaron Spelling, Writer: Gene Levitt, Dir: Richard Lang
Main cast: Ricardo Montalban (Mr. Roarke), Bill Bixby (Arnold Greenwood), Sandra Dee (Francesca Hamilton), Peter Lawford (Grant Baines).

‘522666’, episode six, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 22.11.1996.
Writer: Glen Morgan/James Wong, Dir: David Nutter
Main cast: Joe Chrest (Raymond Dees), Sam Anderson (Pierson), Robert Lewis (Sullivan).

‘Frankenstein’, episode two, *Mystery and Imagination*, fourth series, UK, Thames, tx. 11.11.1968.
Writer: Mary Shelley/Robert Muller, Dir: Voytek
Main cast: Ian Holm (Frankenstein/Monster), Richard Vernon (Professor Krempe).

‘Frankenstein’, episode sixteen, *Tales of Tomorrow*, first series, US, ABC, tx. 18.1.1952.

Writer: Mary Shelley/Henry Myers, Dir: Don Medford
Main cast: Lon Chaney Jr. (Frankenstein's Monster), Mercedes McCambridge, John Newland.

'Gehenna', episode two, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 1.11.1996.

Writer: Chris Carter, Dir: David Nutter

Main cast: Don Mackay (Jack Meredith), Chris Ellis (Jim Penseyres), Robin Gammell (Mike Atkins), Sam Kouth (Dylan).

Ghosts, UK, BBC2, tx. 21.1.1995. – 25.2.1995.

Prod: Ruth Baumgarten.

Ghost Story, A, UK, BBC, tx. 31.10.1947.

Prod: uncredited, Presenter: Robert Barr.

Ghost Story for Christmas, UK, BBC1, tx. 24.12.1971. - 25.12.1978.

Prod: Rosemary Hill.

'Halloween', episode six, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, second series, US, 20th Century Fox Television/Mutant Enemy Inc./Kuzui Enterprises/Sandollar Television, tx. 27.10.1997.

Writer: Carl Ellsworth, Dir: Bruce Seth Green

Main cast: Robin Sachs (Ethan Rayne), Seth Green (Oz), James Marsters (Spike), Juliet Landau (Drusilla).

Hammer House of Horror, UK, Hammer/Thames, tx. 13.9.1980. – 6.12.1980.

Prod: Roy Skeggs.

Hardy Boys Mysteries, The, US, Universal TV, tx. 30.1.1977. – 7.1.1979.

Prod: Glen A. Larson

Main cast: Shaun Cassidy (Joe Hardy), Parker Stevenson (Frank Hardy).

Haunted, UK, ABC, tx. 19.8.1967. – 13.1.1968.

Prod: Michael Chapman.

Haunting of Helen Walker (aka Turn of the Screw), UK/US, Norman Rosemont Productions, tx. 11.4.1997.

Prod: Nick Gillott/Tom McLoughlin, Writer: Henry James/Hugh Whitemore, Dir: Tom McLoughlin

Main cast: Valerie Bertinelli (Helen Walker), Diana Rigg (Mrs. Grose), Florence Hoath (Flora), Aled Roberts (Miles).

Heimat, Germany, Edgar Reitz Film/Sender Freies Berlin/Westdeutscher Rundfunk, tx. 16.8.1984. – 25.10.1984.

Prod: Edgar Reitz/Hans Kwiet/Joachim von Mengershausen, Writer: Edgar Reitz/Peter F. Steinbach, Dir: Edgar Reitz

Main cast: Marita Breuer (Maria).

Hercules: The Legendary Journeys, US, MCA Television Entertainment Inc./Renaissance Pictures/Studios USA Television/Universal TV. tx. 5.5.1994. – 27.11.1999.

Prod: Sam Raimi/Robert G. Tapert/Christian Williams

Main cast: Kevin Sorbo (Hercules), Michael Hurst (Iolaus).

Hill Street Blues, US, MTM Enterprises Inc., tx. 15.1.1981. – 12.5.1987.

Prod: Steve Bocho/Gregory Hoblit

Main cast: Daniel J. Travanti (Captain Frank Furillo), Barbara Babcock (Grace Gardner).

Homicide: Life on the Street, US, Baltimore Picture/Fatima Prodcutions/NBC/MCEG Sterling Entertainment, tx. 31.1.1993. - 21.5.1999.

Prod: Anya Epstein/David Simon, Creator: Barry Levinson

Main cast: Daniel Baldwin (Det. Beau Felton), Ned Beatty (Det. Stan Bolander), Richard Belzer (Det. John Munch), Andre Braugher (Det. Frank Pembleton).

Hour of Mystery, UK, ABC, tx. 15.6.1957. – 26.10.1957.

Prod: John Nelson Burton, Presenter: Donald Wolfit.

‘House, The’, episode one, *The Wednesday Thriller*, UK, BBC1, tx. 4.8.1965.

Writer: Peter van Greenaway, Dir: Naomi Capon

Main cast: Denholm Elliott (John Fairchild), Nancie Jackson (Cathy Fairchild), Terence Alexander (Mr. Vincent), Rachel Gurney (Mrs. Vincent).

‘Ice House, The’, episode eight, *Ghost Story for Christmas*, UK, BBC1, tx. 25.12.1978.

Writer: John Bowen, Dir: Derek Lister

Main cast: John Stride (Paul), David Beames (Bob), Elizabeth Romilly (Jessica), Geoffrey Burridge (Clovis).

I Dream of Jeannie, US, Columbia Pictures Television/Sidney Shelman Productions, tx. 18.9.1965. – 26.5.1970.

Prod: Sidney Shelman, et al

Main cast: Barbara Eden (Jeannie), Larry Hagman (Major Anthony Nelson), Hayden Rorke (Col. Alfred E. Bellows), Emmaline Henry (Amanda Bellows).

‘Inhumanitas’, episode ten, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 17.1.1996.

Writer: Stephen Gaghan/Michael R. Perry, Dir: Bruce Seth Green

Main cast: Pat Hingle (Father Tilden), Tim Grimm (W. Bryan Hudson), Wayne DeHart (Bertie).

Jewel in the Crown, The, UK, Granada, tx. 9.1.1984. – 3.4.1984.

Prod: Denis Forman/Christopher Morahan, Writer: Paul Scott/Ken Taylor, Dir: Christopher Morahan/Jim O’Brien

Main cast: Tim Pigott-Smith (Ronald Merrick), Susan Woolridge (Daphne Manners), Art Malik (Hari Kumar).

Journey to the Unknown, UK, ATV/Hammer/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 14.4.1968. – 8.5.1970.

Prod: Anthony Hinds.

‘Kingdom Come’, episode five, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 29.11.1996.

Writer: Jorge Zamacoma, Dir: Winrich Kolbe

Main cast: Lindsay Crouse (Ardis Cohen), Michael Zelniker (Calloway), Laurie Murdoch (Father Schultz), Arnie Watlers (Father Brown).

‘Kiss of Blood, The’, episode six, *Late Night Horror*, UK, BBC2, tx. 24.5.1968.

Writer: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle/John Hawkesworth, Dir: Richard Martin

Main cast: Diane Cilento (Lady Sannox), Roy Dotrice (Douglas Stone), Charles Workman (Lord Sannox).

‘Lamentation’, episode eighteen, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 18.4.1997.

Writer: Chris Carter, Dir: Winrich Kolbe

Main cast: Alex Diakun (Dr. Ephraim Fabrikant), Sarah Jane Reedman (Lucy Butler), Michael David Simms (Special Agent Tom Babich), Lee Van Paassen (Sondra Fabrikant).

Late Night Horror, UK, BBC2, tx. 19.4.1968. – 24.5.1968.

Prod: Harry Moore.

Leave it to Beaver, US, ABC/CBS/Kayro Productions/Revue Studios/Gomalco Productions, tx. 4.10.1957. – 20.6.1963.

Prod: Joe Connelly/Richard Lewis/Bob Mosher

Main cast: Barbara Billingsley (June Cleaver), Hugh Beaumont (Ward Cleaver), Tony Dow (Wally Cleaver), Jerry Mathers (Theodore ‘Beaver’ Cleaver).

Lights Out, US, NBC, tx. 19.7.1949. – 29.9.1952.

Prod: Fred Coe.

‘Lost Hearts’, episode six, *Mystery and Imagination*, first series, UK, ABC, tx. 5.3.1966.

Writer: M.R. James/Giles Cooper, Dir: Robert Tronson

Main cast: Richard Pearson (Mr. Abney), Megs Jenkins (Mrs. Bunch), Francis Thomson (Stephen Elliott), Freddie Jones (Parkes).

‘Lost Hearts’ episode three, *Ghost Story for Christmas*, UK, BBC1, tx. 25.12.1973.

Writer: M.R.James/Robin Chapman, Dir: Lawrence Gordon Clark

Main cast: Joseph O’Conor (Mr. Abney), Susan Richards (Mrs. Bunch), Simon Gipps-Kent (Stephen), James Mellor (Parkes).

‘Listener, The’, episode two, *Mystery and Imagination*, third series, UK, ABC, tx. 29.3.1968.

Writer: Algernon Blackwood/William Trevor, Dir: Bill Bain

Main cast: Edward Woodward (Reeve), Clifford Rose (Dr. Chappell), Elizabeth Begley (Mrs. Monson), Colette O’Neil (Emily).

Magnum P.I., US, Belisarius Production/Glen A. Larson Productions/Universal Television, tx. 11.1.1980. – 1.5.1988.
Prod: Glen A. Larson/Donald P. Bellisario
Main cast: Tom Selleck (Thomas Sullivan Magnum), John Hillerman (Jonathan Quale Higgins III), Roger E. Mosley (Theodore 'T.C.' Calvin).

Medea, Denmark, Danmarks Radio, tx. 15.7.1987.
Prod: Vibeke Gad, Writer: Euripides/Carl Theodor Dreyer/Preben Thomsen/Lars von Trier, Dir: Lars von Trier
Main cast: Udo Kier (Jason), Kirsten Olesen (Medea), Henning Jensen (Kreon).

Melrose Place, US, Darren Star Productions/Fox Television Network/Spelling Television/Torand Productions Inc., tx. 8.7.1997. – 24.5.1999.
Prod: Charles Pratt Jr./Frank South/Aaron Spelling/Darren Star/E. Duke Vincent.

Miami Vice, US, Universal TV, tx. 16.9.1984. – 28.6.1989.
Prod: Michael Mann, Creator: Anthony Yerkovich
Main cast: Don Johnson (James 'Sonny' Crockett), Phillip Michael Thomas (Ricardo Tubbs), Edward James Olmos (Martin Castillo).

Millennium, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 25.10.1996. – 21.5.1999.
Prod: Chip Johannessen/Chris Carter/Glen Morgan/James Wong/Michael Duggan.
Creator: Chris Carter
Main cast: Lance Henriksen (Frank Black), Megan Gallagher (Catherine Black), Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black), Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts), Bill Smitrovich (Bob Bletcher).

'Mr. Nightingale', episode four, *Supernatural*, UK, BBC1, tx. 2.7.1977.
Writer: Robert Muller, Dir: Alan Cooke
Main cast: Jeremy Brett (Mr. Nightingale), Lesley Anne Down (Felizitas), Susan Maudsley (Elise), Bruce Purchase (Herr Steekebeck).

Munsters, The, US, Kayro-Vue Productions, tx. 24.9.1964. – 12.5.1966.
Prod: Joe Connelly/Bob Mosher
Main cast: Fred Gwyne (Herman Munster), Yvonne de Carlo (Lily Munster), Al Lewis (Grandpa Munster), Butch Patrick (Eddie Munster).

Mystery and Imagination, UK, ABC & Thames, tx. 29.1.1966. – 23.2.1970.
Prod: Jonathan Alwyn (ABC)/Reginald Collin (Thames).

Northanger Abbey, UK/US, BBC2/A&E Network, tx. 15.2.1987.
Prod: Louis Marks, Writer: Jane Austen/Maggie Wadley, Dir: Giles Foster
Main cast: Katharine Schlesinger (Catherine Moreland), Peter Firth (Henry Tilney), Robert Hardy (General Tilney), Googie Withers (Mrs. Allen).

Northern Exposure, US, Universal TV, 12.7.1990. – 26.7.1995.
Prod: Cheryl Bloch et al
Main cast: Rob Morrow (Dr. Joel Fleishman), Janine Turner (Maggie O'Connel), Darren E. Burrows (Ed Chigliak), Elaine Miles (Marilyn Whirlwind).

NYPD Blue, US, 20th Century Fox Television/Steven Bocho Productions, tx. 21.9.1993. – 21.5.2002.

Prod: Steve Bocho/Gregory Hoblit/Mark Tinker

Main cast: Denis Franz (Andy Sipowicz), Jimmy Smits (Bobby Simone).

‘Open Door, The’, episode four, *Mystery and Imagination*, first series, UK, ABC, tx. 19.2.1966.

Writer: Margaret Oliphant/George Kerr, Dir: Joan Kemp-Welch

Main cast: Jack Hawkins (Col. Mortimer), Rachel Gurney (Mrs. Mortimer), Derek Tansley (Corporal Jones), Amanda Walker (the voice).

Oprah Winfrey Show, The, US, Harpo Productions, tx. 8.9.1986. – current.

Prod: Dianne Atkinson/Oprah Winfrey.

Others, The, US, Dreamworks Television/NBC Productions, tx. 5.2.2000. – 10.6.2000.

Prod: Glen Morgan/James Wong/John D. Brancato/Michael Ferris, Writer: Glen Morgan/James Wong

Main cast: Julianne Nicholson (Marian Kitt), Gabriel Macht (Dr. Mark Gabriel), Bill Cobbs (Elmer Greentree).

Outer Limits, The, US, Daystar Productions/United Artists Television/Villa di Stefano, tx. 16.9.1963. – 16.1.1965.

Prod: Leslie Stevens.

Out of the Unknown, UK, BBC2, tx. 4.10.1965. – 30.6.1971.

Prod: Irene Shubik/Alan Bromly.

‘Paper Dove’, episode twenty-two, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 16.5.1996.

Writer: Walon Green/Ted Mann, Dir: Thomas Wright

Main cast: Paul Raskin (The Figure), Mike Starr (Henry Dion), Linda Sorenson (Marie France Dion), Angela Donahue (Amy Lee Walker).

‘Pilot’, episode one, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 22.9.1995.

Writer: Shaun Cassidy, Dir: Peter O’Fallon

Main cast: Sonny Shroyer (Gage Temple), Lynda Clark (Rita Barber), Tammy Arnold (Caleb’s Mother).

‘Pilot’, episode one, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 25.10.1996.

Writer: Chris Carter, Dir: David Nutter

Main cast: Paul Dillon (The Frenchman), Stephen James Lang (Detective Geibelhouse), Kimm Wakefield (Young Woman).

‘Plague Sower, The’, episode eleven, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 24.1.1996.

Writer: Robert Palm, Dir: Mel Damski

Main cast: John Mese (Dr. Billy Peale), Michael Harding (A.E. Tippet).

Play for Today, UK, BBC1, tx. 15.7.1970. – 28.8.1984.

Prod: various.

Poltergeist: The Legacy, US, PMP Legacy Productions/Showtime Networks Inc./Trilogy Entertainment Group, tx. 21.4.1996. – 12.11.1999.

Prod: Richard Barton Lewis/Grant Rosenberg/Mark Stern

Main cast: Derek de Lint (Derek Raine), Helen Shaver (Dr. Rachel Corrigan).

‘Potato Boy’, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, N.B. This episode was unaired in the US on the first run of the series

Writer: Michael Nankin, Dir: Nick Marck

Main cast: Trip Cobby (Potato Boy), Tina Lifford (Loris Holt), John Bennes (Rev. Coombes).

‘Powers, Principalities, Thrones and Dominions’, episode nineteen, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 25.4.1997.

Writer: Ted Mann, Dir: Harold Rosenthal

Main cast: Richard Cox (Al Pepper), Rodney Eastman (Samiel), Alf Humphreys (Damon Rimmer), Bonnie Hay (Assistant D.A. Mills).

Pride and Prejudice, UK/US, BBC/A&E Network, tx. 24.9.1995. – 29.10.1995.

Prod: Sue Birtwistle, Writer: Jane Austen/Andrew Davies, Dir: Simon Langton

Main cast: Colin Firth (Darcy), Jennifer Ehle (Elizabeth Bennet), Alison Steadman (Mrs. Bennet).

Profiler, US, Sander Moses Productions/Three Putt Productions/NBC Studios, tx. 21.9.1996. – 1.7.2000.

Prod: Steven Kronish/Kim Moses/Ian Sander

Main cast: Ally Walker (Dr. Samantha ‘Sam’ Waters), Jamie Luner (Rachel Burke), Robert Davi (Bailey Malone), Julian McMahon (John Grant).

Quantum Leap, US, Belisarius Productions/Universal TV, tx. 26.3.1989. – 5.5.1993.

Prod: Donald P. Bellisario

Main cast: Scott Bakula (Sam Beckett), Dean Stockwell (Rear Admiral Al Calavicci).

Quatermass Experiment, The, UK, BBC, tx. 18.7.1953. – 22.8.1953.

Prod: Rudolph Cartier, Writer: Nigel Kneale, Dir: Rudolph Cartier

Main cast: Reginald Tate (Professor Bernard Quatermass), Duncan Lamont (Victor Carroon), Moray Watson (Peter Marsh), Isabel Dean (Judith Carroon).

Quatermass II, UK, BBC, tx. 22.10.1955. - 26.11.1955.

Prod: Rudolph Cartier, Writer: Nigel Kneale, Dir: Rudolph Cartier

Main cast: John Robinson (Professor Quatermass), Monica Grey (Paula Quatermass), Hugh Griffiths (Dr. Leo Pugh), John Stone (Captain John Dillon).

Rebecca, UK, BBC, tx. 19.1.1947.

Prod: Harold Clayton, Writer: Daphne du Maurier/adaptation uncredited, Dir: Harold Clayton

Main cast: Frederick Victor (Frith), Dorothy Black (Mrs. Danvers), Michael Hordern (Maxim de Winter), Dorothy Gordon (Mrs. de Winter).

Rebecca, UK, BBC, tx. 10.10.1954.

Prod: Rudolph Cartier, Writer: Daphne du Maurier/adaptation uncredited, Dir: Rudolph Cartier

Main cast: Ian Colin (Frank Crawley), William Squire (Maxim de Winter), Jeanette Sterke (Mrs. de Winter).

Rebecca, UK, BBC1, tx. 24.1.1979. – 7.2.1979.

Prod: Richard Benyon, Writer: Daphne du Maurier/Hugh Whitemore, Dir: Simon Langton

Main cast: Jeremy Brett (Maxim de Winter), Joanna David (Mrs. de Winter), Anna Massey (Mrs. Danvers).

Rebecca, UK/US, Carlton/Portman Productions, tx. 5.1.1997. – 6.1.1997.

Prod: Hilary Heath, Writer: Daphne du Maurier/Arthur Hopcraft, Dir: Jim O'Brien

Main cast: Charles Dance (Maxim de Winter), Emilia Fox (Mrs. de Winter), Diana Rigg (Mrs. Danvers).

'Resurrector', episode nine, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx. 10.1.1996.

Writer: Shaun Cassidy/Michael R. Perry/Stephen Gaghan, Dir: Elodie Keene

Main cast: Gregg Travis (Mel Kirby), Irene Ziegler (Gloria Kirby), Chris Fennell (Boone).

Riget (The Kingdom), Denmark, Danmarks Radio/Zentropa, tx. 24.11.1994. – 22.12.1994.

Prod: Ole Reim, Writer: Lars von Trier/Niels Vørsel/Tómas Gislason, Dir: Lars von Trier

Main cast: Ernst Hugo Järegård (Stig Helmer), Kirsten Rolfes (Mrs. Drusse), Ghita Nørby (Rigmor), Søren Pilmark (Krogen).

Riget II (The Kingdom II), Denmark, Danmarks Radio/Zentropa, tx. 1.11.1997. – 6.12.1997.

Prod: Ole Reim, Writer: Lars von Trier/Niels Vørsel/Tómas Gislason, Dir: Lars von Trier/Morten Arnfred

Main cast: Ernst Hugo Järegård (Stig Helmer), Kirsten Rolfes (Mrs. Drusse), Ghita Nørby (Rigmor), Søren Pilmark (Krogen).

'Room 13', episode one, *Mystery and Imagination*, second series, UK, ABC, tx. 22.10.1966.

Writer: M.R. James/Evelyn Frazer, Dir: Patrick Dromgoole

Main cast: David Buck (Richard Beckett), Joss Ackland (Herr Scavenius), David Bettley (Klaus), George Woodbridge (Herr Kristensen).

St. Elsewhere, US, MTM Enterprises Inc., tx. 26.10.1982. – 25.5.1988.

Prod: Channing Gibson/Bruce Paltrow/John Tinker/Mark Tinker

Main cast: Ed Flanders (Dr. Donald Westphall), Norman Lloyd (Dr. Daniel Auschlander), Ed Begley Jr. (Dr. Victor Ehrlich).

Saturday Night Stories, UK, BBC, tx. 24.1.1948. – 22.10.1949.

Prod: uncredited.

seaQuest dsv, US, Amblin Entertainment/Universal TV, tx. 12.9.1993. – 9.6.1996.
Prod: Steven Spielberg et al
Main cast: Don Franklin (Jonathan Ford), Michael DeLuise (Tony Piccolo), Edward Kerr (James Brody).

Shoah, France, French Ministry of Culture and Communication/Historia/Les Films Aleph, tx. 30.4.1985. – 9.7.1985.
Prod: Claude Lanzmann, Dir: Claude Lanzmann.

‘Signalman, The’, episode six, *Ghost Story for Christmas*, UK, BBC1, tx. 22.12.1976.
Writer: Charles Dickens/Andrew Davies, Dir: Lawrence Gordon Clark
Main cast: Denholm Elliott (the Signalman), Bernard Lloyd (the Traveller), Carina Wyeth (the Bride), Reginald Jessup (the Engine Driver).

Singing Detective, The, UK, BBC1, tx. 16.11.1986 – 21.12.1986
Prod: John Harris/Kenith Trodd, Writer: Dennis Potter, Dir: Jon Amiel
Main cast: Michael Gambon (Philip Marlow), Patrick Malahide (Mark Finney), Joanne Walley (Nurse Mills), Janet Suzman (Nicola).

‘Single Blade of Grass, A’, episode five, *Millennium*, second series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 24.10.1997.
Writer: Erin Maher/Kay Reindl, Dir: Rodman Flender
Main cast: Amy Steel (Dr. Liz Michaels), Garry Chalk (Richard Powell).

Skallagrigg, UK, BBC2, tx. 9.3.1994.
Prod: John Chapman, Writer: William Horwood/Nigel Williams, Dir: Richard Spence
Main cast: Kerry Noble (Esther), Bernard Hill (John), John McArdle (Dilke), Kevin Whately (Hopkins).

‘Stigma’, episode seven, *Ghost Story for Christmas*, UK, BBC1, tx. 28.12.1977.
Writer: Clive Exton, Dir: Lawrence Gordon Clark
Main cast: Kate Binchy (Katherine), Peter Bowles (Peter), Christopher Blake (Richard), Maxine Gordon (Verity).

Strange, UK, BBC1, tx. 9.3.2002.
Prod: Marcus Mortimer, Writer: Andrew Marshall, Dir: Joe Ahearne
Main cast: Richard Coyle (John Strange), Ian Richardson (Canon Black), Samantha Janus (Nurse Jude Atkins), Alastair Mackenzie (Rich).

Sunset Beach, US, Aaron Spelling Productions Inc./NBC, tx. 6.1.1997. – 31.12.1999.
Prod: Gary Tomlin/E. Duke Vincent/Aaron Spelling.

Supernatural, UK, BBC1, tx. 11.6.1977. – 6.8.1977.
Prod: Pieter Rogers, Writer: Robert Muller/Sue Lake.

Suspense, US, CBS, tx. 1.3.1949. – 17.8.1954.
Prod: Martin Manulis.

‘Sweeney Todd’, episode two, *Mystery and Imagination*, fifth series, UK, Thames, tx. 9.2.1970.

Writer: George Dibdin Pitt/Vincent Tilsley. Dir: Reginald Collin
Main cast: Freddie Jones (Sweeney Todd), Peter Sallis (Brogden/Mundel/Hopkins).
Russell Hunter (Crumbles, Dr. Fogg, Dr. Makepeace).

Tales of Mystery, UK, A-R, tx. 29.3.1961. – 14.3.1963.
Prod: Peter Graham Scott, Presenter: John Laurie.

Tales of Tomorrow, US, ABC, tx. 3.8.1951. – 12.6.1953.
Prod: George F. Foley/Richard Gordon.

‘Thin White Line, The’, episode fourteen, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th
Century Fox Television, tx. 14.2.1996.
Writer: Glen Morgan/James Wong, Dir: Thomas J. Wright
Main cast: Jeremy Roberts (Richard Hance), Scott Heindl (Jacob Tyler), Eric Breker
(Howard Rothenburg), Nancy Sivak (Anne Rothenburg).

Thriller, US, Hubbell Robinson Productions/NBC, tx. 13.9.1960. – 30.4.1962.
Prod: William Frye/Fletcher Markle/Maxwell Shane, Presenter: Boris Karloff

‘To Hell and Back’, episode fourteen, *American Gothic*, US, CBS/Renaissance, tx.
3.7.1996.
Writer: Judi Ann Mason/Robert Palm, Dir: Oz Scott
Main cast: Robert Treveiler (Chester Langston), Megan Gallagher (Claire Crower).

‘Traccate Middoth, The’, episode five, *Mystery and Imagination*, first series, UK,
ABC, tx. 26.2.1966.
Writer: M.R. James/Dennis Webb, Dir: Kim Mills
Main cast: David Buck (Richard Beckett), Norman Scace (John Eldred), Jerry Verne
(Hodgson), Barbara Lott (Mrs. Simpson).

Turn of the Screw, UK/US, United Film and Television Productions/Meridian, tx.
26.12.1999.
Prod: Michael Buck/Rebecca Eaton/Tim Vaughan, Writer: Henry James/Nick Dear,
Dir: Ben Bolt
Main cast: Jodhi May (Miss), Pam Ferris (Mrs. Grose), Colin Firth (The Master).

Twilight Zone, The, US, CBS Television/Cayuga Productions, tx. 2.10.1959. –
19.6.1964.
Prod: Rod Serling.

Twin Peaks, US, Lynch-Frost Productions/Spelling Entertainment/Twin Peaks
Productions Inc., tx. 8.4.1990. – 10.6.1991.
Prod: Mark Frost/David Lynch
Main cast: Kyle MacLachlan (Special Agent Dale Cooper), Michael Ontkean (Sheriff
Harry S. Truman), Mädchen Amick (Shelley Johnson), Dana Ashbrook (Bobby
Briggs).

Ultraviolet, UK, World Productions, tx. 15.9.1998. – 20.10.1998.
Prod: Sophie Balhetchet/Bill Shapter, Writer: Joe Ahearne, Dir: Joe Ahearne

Main cast: Jack Davenport (Detective Sergeant Michael Colefield), Susannah Harker (Dr. Angie March), Idris Elba (Vaughan Rice). Philip Quast (Father Pearse J. Harman).

‘Uncle Silas’, episode one, *Mystery and Imagination*, fourth series. UK. Thames. tx. 4.11.1968.

Writer: J.S. Le Fanu/Stanley Miller, Dir: Alan Cooke

Main cast: Robert Eddison (Silas Ruthyn), Lucy Fleming (Maud Ruthyn). Patience Collier (Madame de la Rougiere).

Urban Gothic, UK, Channel 5, tx. 17.6.2000. – 28.12.2001.

Prod: Steve Matthews/Michelle Frances, Writer: Tom De Ville, Dir: Ian Knox.

Walking With Dinosaurs, UK, BBC1/Pro 7, tx. 4.10.1999. – 8.11.1999.

Prod: Tomi Bednar Landis/John Lynch, Writer: Georgann Kane, Dir: Tim Haines/Jasper James.

‘Warning to the Curious, A’, episode two, *Ghost Story for Christmas*, UK, BBC1, tx. 24.12.1974.

Writer: M.R. James/Lawrence Gordon Clark, Dir: Lawrence Gordon Clark

Main cast: Peter Vaughan (Paxton), Clive Swift (Black). John Kearney (Ager/Ghost).

The Wednesday Thriller, UK, BBC1, tx. 4.8.1965. – 29.9.1965

Prod: Bernard Hepton.

‘Weeds’, episode ten, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 24.1.1997.

Writer: Frank Spotnitz, Dir: Michael Pattinson

Main cast: CCH Pounder (Cheryl Andrews), Josh Clark (Edward Petey), Michael Tomlinson (Mr. Comstock), Terry David Mulligan (Mr. Birckenbuehl).

‘Well-Worn Lock, The’, episode eight, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 20.12.1996.

Writer: Chris Carter, Dir: Ralph Hemecker

Main cast: Paul Dooley (Joe Bangs), Michelle Joyner (Connie Bangs). Sheila Moore (Clea Bangs), Shaina Tianne Unger (Sara Bangs).

‘Whistle and I’ll Come to You’, *Omnibus*, UK, BBC1, tx. 7.5.1968.

Prod: Jonathan Miller, Writer: M.R. James/Jonathan Miller, Dir: Jonathan Miller.

Main cast: Michael Hordern (Professor Parkin), Ambrose Coghill (Colonel).

‘Wide Open’, episode nine, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 3.1.1997.

Writer: Charles Holland, Dir: Jim Charleston

Main cast: Pablo Coffey (Cutter), Glynn Turman (James Glen), Nevada Ash (Patricia Highsmith), Eileen Keney (Beverly Bunn).

‘Wild and the Innocent, The’, episode eleven, *Millennium*, first series, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 10.1.1997.

Writer: Jorge Zamacoma, Dir: Thomas Wright

Main cast: Heather McComb (Maddie Haskell), Jeffery Donovan (Billy Webber), John Pyper-Ferguson (Jim Gilroy), Michael Hogan (Captain Bigelow).

‘Woman in White’, episode three, *Hour of Mystery*, UK, ABC, tx. 29.6.1957.
Prod: John Nelson Burton, Writer: Wilkie Collins/Peter John Dyer, Dir: Herbert Wise
Main cast: Sarah Lawson (Laura), Eric Poulman (Count Fosco), Peter Burton (Walter Hartright), Paula Byrne (Anne Catherick), Mary MacKenzie (Marion Halcombe).

Woman in White, UK, BBC1, tx. 2.10.1966. – 6.11.1966.
Prod: David Conroy, Writer: Wilkie Collins/Michael Vosey, Dir: Brandon Acton Boyd
Main cast: Geoffrey Bayldon (Mr. Fairlie), Alan Collins (Louis), Alethea Charlton (Marian Halcombe), Louis Mansi (Professor Pesca), Nicholas Pennell (Walter Hartright), Jennifer Hilary (Anne Catherick/Laura Fairlie).

Woman in White, UK, BBC2, tx. 14.4.1982. – 12.5.1982.
Prod: Jonathan Powell, Writer: Wilkie Collins/Ray Jenkins, Dir: John Bruce
Main cast: Diana Quick (Marian Halcombe), Jenny Seagrove (Laura Fairlie), Diedra Morris (Anne Catherick), Ian Richardson (Frederick Fairlie).

Woman in White, UK/US, BBC/Carlton/WGBH Boston, tx. 28.12.1997. – 29.12.1997.
Prod: Gareth Neame, Writer: Wilkie Collins/David Pirie, Dir: Tim Fywell
Main cast: Tara Fitzgerald (Marian), James Wilby (Sir Percival Glyde), Simon Callow (Count Fosco), Justine Wadell (Laura), Andrew Lincoln (Walter Hartright).

Wyvern Mystery, The, UK, BBC1/The Television Production Company, tx. 5.3.2000. – 12.3.2000.
Prod: Ruth Baumgarten, Writer: J.S. Le Fanu/David Pirie, Dir: Alex Pillai
Main cast: Naomi Watts (Alice), Derek Jacobi (Squire Fairfield), Ian Glen (Charles Fairfield), Aisling O’Sullivan (Vrau).

Xena: Warrior Princess, US, MCA Television Entertainment Inc./Renaissance Pictures/Studios USA Television/Universal Television, tx. 15.9.1995. – 23.6.2001.
Prod: Sam Raimi/Robert Tapert
Main cast: Lucy Lawless (Xena), Renee O’Connor (Gabrielle), Ted Raimi (Joxer), Kevin Smith (Ares).

X-Files, The, US, 10:13/20th Century Fox Television, tx. 10.9.1993. – 19.5.2002.
Prod: Chris Carter et al
Main cast: Gillian Anderson (Special Agent Dana Scully), David Duchovny (Special Agent Fox Mulder).

Filmography

Asylum. Dir. Roy Ward Baker, Prod. Amicus, UK, 1972.

Main cast: Peter Cushing (Smith), Britt Ekland (Lucy), Herbert Lom (Byron), Patrick Magee (Dr. Rutherford).

Brady Bunch Movie, The. Dir. Betty Thomas, Prod. Paramount Pictures, US, 1995.

Main cast: Shelley Long (Carol Brady), Gary Cole (Mike Brady), Christine Taylor (Marcia Brady), Christopher Daniel Barnes (Greg Brady).

Bram Stoker's Dracula. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola, Prod. American Zoetrope/Columbia/Osiris Films, US, 1992.

Main cast: Gary Oldman (Dracula), Winona Ryder (Mina), Keanu Reeves (Jonathan Harker), Sadie Frost (Lucy).

Breaking the Waves. Dir. Lars von Trier, Prod. Argus Film Produktie/Liberator Productions/Trust/Zentropa Entertainments, et al, Denmark/Sweden/France/Netherlands/Norway, 1996.

Main cast: Emily Watson (Bess McNeill), Stellan Skarsgård (Jan Nyman), Katrin Cartlidge (Dodo McNeill), Adrian Rawlins (Dr. Richardson).

Corsican Brothers, The. Dir. George Albert Smith, Prod. George Albert Smith Films, UK, 1898.

Main cast: unknown.

Curse of Frankenstein, The. Dir. Terence Fisher, Prod. Hammer, UK, 1957.

Main cast: Peter Cushing (Baron von Frankenstein), Christopher Lee (The Creature), Hazel Court (Elizabeth), Robert Urquart (Paul Krempe).

Dancer in the Dark. Dir. Lars von Trier, Prod. Zentropa Entertainments, Denmark/Sweden, 2000.

Main cast: Bjork (Selma), Catherine Deneuve (Kathy), David Morse (Bill), Peter Stormare (Jeff).

Darkman. Dir. Sam Raimi, Prod. Renaissance/Universal Pictures, US, 1990.

Main cast: Liam Neeson (Peyton Westlake/Darkman), Frances McDormand (Julie Hastings), Colin Friels (Louis Strack Jr.), Larry Drake (Robert G. Durant).

Dracula. Dir. Tod Browning, Prod. Universal Pictures, US, 1931.

Main cast: Bela Lugosi (Count Dracula), Helen Chandler (Mina Seward), David Manners (Jonathan Harker), Dwight Frye (Renfield).

Dracula. Dir. Terence Fisher, Prod. Hammer, UK, 1958.

Main cast: Peter Cushing (Dr. Van Helsing), Christopher Lee (Count Dracula), Melissa Stribling (Mina), Carol Marsh (Lucy).

Dracula, Prince of Darkness. Dir. Terence Fisher, Prod. Hammer, UK, 1966.

Main cast: Christopher Lee (Dracula), Barbara Shelley (Helen), Andrew Kier (Father Sandor), Francis Matthews (Charles).

Dragonwyck. Dir. Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Prod. 20th Century Fox, U.S. 1947.
Main cast: Gene Tierney (Miranda Wells), Walter Huston (Ephraim Wells), Vincent Price (Nicholas van Ryn), Glen Rangan (Dr. Jeff Turner).

Epidemic. Dir. Lars von Trier, Prod. Danish Film Institute, Elementfilm A/S, Denmark, 1988.
Main cast: Svend Ali Hamann (Svend), Udo Kier (Udo), Claes Kastholm Hansen (Claes), Gitte Lind (Gitte).

Europa. Dir. Lars von Trier, Prod. Nordisk Film/TV A/S, Denmark, 1991.
Main cast: Jean-Marc Barr (Leopold Kessler), Barbara Sukowa (Katharina Hartmann), Udo Kier (Lawrence Hartmann), Ernst-Hugo Järegård (Uncle Kessler).

Evil Dead. Dir. Sam Raimi, Prod. New Line Cinema/Renaissance Pictures, US, 1982.
Main cast: Bruce Campbell (Ash), Ellen Sandweiss (Cheryl), Hal Delrich (Scotty), Betsy Baker (Linda).

Evil Dead II. Dir. Sam Raimi, Prod. Renaissance Pictures, US, 1987.
Main cast: Bruce Campbell (Ash), Sarah Berry (Annie Knowby), Dan Hicks (Jake), Kassie DePaiva (Bobbie Jo).

Faust and Mephistopheles. Dir. George Albert Smith, Prod. George Albert Smith Films, UK, 1898.
Main cast: unknown.

Forbrydelsens element (The Element of Crime). Dir. Lars von Trier, Prod. Danish Film Institute, Per Holst Filmproduktion, Denmark, 1984.
Main cast: Michael Elphick (Fisher), Esmond Knight (Osborne), Me Me Lai (Kim), Jerold Wells (Police Chief Kramer).

Gaslight. Dir. George Cukor, Prod. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, US, 1944.
Main cast: Charles Boyer (Gregory Anton), Ingrid Bergman (Paula Alquist), Joseph Cotton (Brian Cameron), Dame May Whitty (Miss Thwaites).

Gift, The, Dir. Sam Raimi, Prod. Alphaville Films/Lakeshore Entertainment, US, 2000.
Main cast: Cate Blanchett (Annie Wilson), Giovanni Ribisi (Buddy Cole), Greg Kinnear (Wayne Collins), Hilary Swank (Valerie Barksdale).

Golem, wie er in die Welt kam, Der (The Golem: How he came into the World). Dir. Paul Wegener. Prod. Projektion-AG Union, Germany, 1920.
Main cast: Paul Wegener (The Golem), Alber Steinrück (Rabi Loew), Lyda Salmonova (Miriam), Ernst Deutsch (Famulus).

House That Dripped Blood, The. Dir. Peter Duffell, Prod. Amicus, UK, 1971.
Main cast: Denholm Elliott (Charles), Peter Cushing (Philip), Joss Ackland (Rogers), Ingrid Pitt (Carla).

Hush, Hush Sweet Charlotte. Dir. Robert Aldrich. Prod. 20th Century Fox/Aldrich Associates, US, 1964.

Main cast: Bette Davis (Charlotte Hollis), Olivia de Havilland (Miriam Deering), Joseph Cotten (Dr. Drew Bayliss), Agnes Moorehead (Velma Cruther).

Idiots, The (Idioterne). Dir. Lars von Trier, Prod. Zentropa Entertainments et al, Denmark, 1998.

Main cast: Bodil Jørgensen (Karen), Jens Albinus (Stoffer), Anne Louise Hassing (Susanne), Troels Lyby (Henrik).

Innocents, The. Dir. Jack Clayton, Prod. 20th Century Fox, UK, 1961.

Main cast: Deborah Kerr (Miss Giddens), Peter Wyngarde (Peter Quint), Megs Jenkins (Mrs. Grose), Michael Redgrave (The Uncle).

Inside Daisy Clover. Dir. Robert Mulligan, Prod. Park Place Production/Warner Bros., US, 1965.

Main cast: Natalie Wood (Daisy Clover), Christopher Plummer (Raymond Swan), Robert Redford (Wade Lewis), Roddy McDowell (Walter Baines).

I Remember Mama, Dir. George Stevens, Prod. RKO Radio Pictures, US, 1948.

Main cast: Irene Dunne (Mama Marta Hansen), Barbara Bel Geddes (Katrin Hansen), Oskar Homolka (Uncle Chris), Philip Dorn (Papa Hansen).

Kabinett des Dr. Caligari, Das (Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, The). Dir. Robert Wiene, Prod. Decla-Bioscop AG, Germany, 1919.

Main cast: Werner Krauss (Caligari), Conrad Veidt (Cesare), Friedrich Feher (Francis), Lil Dagover (Jane).

Kiss of the Vampire. Dir. Don Sharp, Prod. Hammer, UK, 1964.

Main cast: Clifford Evans (Professor Zimmer), Noel Willman (Ravna), Edward de Souza (Gerald Harcourt), Jennifer Daniel (Marianne).

Lilith. Dir. Robert Rossen, Prod. Columbia Pictures Corporation, US, 1964.

Main cast: Warren Beatty (Vincent Bruce), Jean Seberg (Lilith Arthur), Peter Fonda (Stephen Evshevsky), Kim Hunter (Dr. Bea Brice).

Manoir du diable, Le (Devil's Castle, The). Dir. Georges Méliès, Prod. Star, France, 1896.

Main cast: Georges Méliès (Mephistopheles), Jeanne d'Alcy.

Meet Me in St. Louis. Dir. Vincente Minnelli, Prod. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, US, 1944.

Main cast: Judy Garland (Esther Smith), Margaret O'Brien (Tootie Smith), Mary Astor (Mrs. Anna Smith), Lucille Bremer (Rose Smith).

Mildred Pierce. Dir. Michael Curtiz, Prod. Warner Bros., US, 1945.

Main cast: Joan Crawford (Mildred Pierce), Jack Carson (Wally Fay), Zachary Scott (Monte Baragon), Eve Arden (Ida Corwin).

Miracle on 34th Street. Dir. George Seaton, Prod. 20th Century Fox, US, 1947.

Main cast: Maureen O'Hara (Doris Walker), John Payne (Fred Gailey), Edmund Gwenn (Kris Kringle), Gene Lockhart (Judge Henry X. Harper) Natalie Wood (Susan Walker)

Müde tod, Der (aka *Destiny*). Dir. Fritz Lang, Prod. Decla-Bioscop AG, Germany, 1921.

Main cast: Max Adalbert (Noter/Schatzmeister), Paul Biensfeldt (Ahi), Lewis Brody (Mohr), Lil Dagover (Junge Maedchen/Zobeide/Fiametta/Tiaotsien)

Nattevagten (*Nightwatch*). Dir. Ole Bornedal, Prod. Thura Film, Denmark, 1994.

Main cast: Nikolaj Coster-Waldau (Martin), Sofie Gråbøl (Kalinka), Kim Bodnia (Jens), Lotte Andersen (Lotte).

Night of the Demon (aka *Curse of the Demon*). Dir. Jacques Tourneur, Prod. Columbia, UK, 1957.

Main cast: Dana Andrews (Dr. John Holden), Peggy Cummins (Joanna Harrington), Niall MacGinnis (Dr. Julian Karswell), Maurice Deham (Professor Harrington).

Nosferatu – eine Symphonie des Grauens (*Nosferatu – a Symphony of Horrors*). Dir. F.W. Murnau, Prod. Jofa Atelier Berlin-Johannisthal/Prana-Film, Germany, 1922.

Main cast: Max Schreck (Nosferatu), Greta Schröder (Nina), Gustav von Wangenheim (Jonathan Harker), Alexander Granach (Knock, the Broker).

Photographing a Ghost. Dir. George Albert Smith, Prod. George Albert Smith Films, UK, 1898.

Main cast: unknown.

Rebecca. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock, Prod. Selznick International Pictures, US, 1940.

Main cast: Laurence Olivier (Maxim de Winter), Joan Fontaine (Mrs. de Winter), George Sanders (Jack Favell), Judith Anderson (Mrs. Danvers)

Secret Beyond the Door. Dir. Fritz Lang, Prod. Diana Production Company, US, 1947.

Main cast: Joan Bennett (Celia Lamphere), Michael Redgrave (Mark Lamphere), Anne Revere (Caroline Lamphere), Barbara O'Neil (Mrs. Robey).

Se7en. Dir. David Fincher, Prod. New Line Cinema, US, 1995.

Main cast: Morgan Freeman (Detective William Somerset), Brad Pitt (Detective David Mills), Kevin Spacey (John Doe), Gwyneth Paltrow (Tracy Mills).

Silence of the Lambs. Dir. Jonathan Demme, Prod. Orion, US, 1991.

Main cast: Jodie Foster (Clarice Starling), Anthony Hopkins (Hannibal Lecter), Ted Levine (Jame 'Buffalo Bill' Gumb), Scott Glen (Jack Crawford).

Spiral Staircase, The. Dir. Robert Siodmak, Prod. Dore Schary Productions/RKO Radio Pictures Inc./Vanguard Films, US, 1946.

Main cast: Dorothy McGuire (Helen Capel), George Brent (Professor Warren), Ethel Barrymore (Mrs. Warren), Kent Smith (Dr. Parry).

Two Mrs. Carrolls, The. Dir. Peter Godfrey, Prod. Warner Bros., US, 1947.

Main cast: Humphrey Bogart (Geoffrey Carroll), Barbara Stanwyck (Sally Morton Carroll), Alexis Smith (Cecily Latham), Nigel Bruce (Dr. Tuttle).